MEMORIALS & LETTERS OF ANN HUNT

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MATILDA STURGE

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From a Photo. by William Clark, 87, Park St., Bristol.

Even they faithfully attached
A Hunt

MEMORIALS AND LETTERS OF ANN HUNT. COMPILED BY MATILDA STURGE.

O sweet calm face that seemed to wear
The look of sins forgiven!
O voice of prayer that seemed to bear
Our own needs up to heaven!

How reverent in our midst she stood
Or knelt in grateful praise!
What grace of Christian womanhood
Was in her household ways.

J. G. Whittier.

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PREFACE.

In preparing these Memorials I have had the valuable assistance of Hannah Southall, without whose sympathy and encouragement, combined with the materials which she and her sister have so kindly furnished, they would never have been offered to the public.

I am also indebted to Anne M. Hunt and Rebecca Zaytoun for letters and information, as well as to Joseph Storrs Fry, and many other friends, who will, I hope, accept my cordial thanks as if each one were mentioned by name.

Those who knew Ann Hunt will feel that no apology is needed for the attempt to represent her character, and to carry on a little of her influence, but a lenient judgment may be required for the manner in which the task has been accomplished. The letters speak for themselves, but letters alone would scarcely suffice, and in trying to supplement them it is not easy to achieve a satisfactory result. All portraiture has to encounter two kinds of criticism—the comments of those who were acquainted with the original, and may find the representation inadequate and unlike, and those of others who may fail to discern in it the distinctive qualities and personality of the subject.

Probably most biographies fall short more or less in fulfilling their ideal, yet when they succeed but in part, they have their value, and may be interesting and profitable to both classes of readers, and it is for this measure of success that I venture to hope.

At least it may be said that this little book contains no empty eulogy; it is an attempt to preserve the record of one of the humble souls whom Whittier called "The dear Lord's best interpreters," and to impart to others "the Gospel" of her life.

M.S.

1898.

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CHAPTER I.

Life teaches us its lessons by degrees,
And slowly yields its secrets; as some hill
Which in the shadeless noon lay smooth and still,
Reveals undreamed of chasms, if a breeze
Fleck it with cloud-born shadows; so are these
Learnt by long watching as the sunbeams fill
Our depths, and the storms chasten, if we will
But strive to see them as our Father sees.

J. E. A. Brown.

ANN HUNT was the daughter of Henry and Ann Hunt, of Bristol, and was born in that city on the 21st of October, 1810. Her father was the son of George and Ann Hunt, who were the parents of a numerous family to whom other branches of the Hunts trace their descent. The mother's maiden name was Ann Marshall; she belonged to a family of Marshalls which can be traced back to 1608. They were early connected with the Society of Friends, and intermarried with the Hunts more than once. There is in the possession of the Marshall family a Bible, with an inscription, which has descended from father to child for eight generations.

Henry Hunt was a man of considerable force of character. He was during his early married life a partner with Joseph Storrs Fry, grandfather of the

present bearer of that name, in the cocoa and chocolate business, which was the beginning of the large manufactory now so well known ; and it was in Union Street, Bristol, in one of the houses still used in connection with that establishment that Ann Hunt was born. She was the fourth of six children, having three brothers older than herself, a sister next her in age, and a younger brother, who was an invalid during most of his life. The children were not brought up in the city ; they lived chiefly with their mother at Thornbury, a small town about ten miles distant, until Ann was six years old. Their father's visits were doubtless constant, but could not have been of daily occurrence ; much of his time was taken up in travelling for the business.

Henry Hunt was a strict Friend, who in time became an Elder, and was deeply interested in the discipline of the Society. He had his children for the most part educated by a tutor at home—a measure of doubtful wisdom as regarded the sons, but one which may have been for the benefit of the daughters, who were taught with their brothers, and probably received a better education than they would at that time have obtained at school. The mother of the family died when her elder daughter was about fifteen. Her death is feelingly alluded to in Ann Hunt's early journals, which begin a year later, and it was a loss that coloured her after life.

She was a girl of strong feelings, sensitive and highly strung, and accustomed from an early age to

express herself in writing, pouring out her thoughts in words that burn with the emotions of the hour. In those early days she formed a romantic friendship with Anna B——, a young girl about her own age. They appear to have been closely united and very intimate, but while Anna was yet young the friendship was terminated by her death. Ann was deeply afflicted, and bitterly mourned her loss. She wrote a poem on her departed friend, and drops a hint in her journal that even her sister could not sympathise with the extravagance of her grief. These things are mentioned to show the natural warmth and tenderness of one whose heart was afterwards wrung by sorer troubles—one, too, who learned in the school of sorrow to become the consoler of others in an unusual degree. A letter, written in 1859, to one of her nieces, contains an interesting allusion to her early religious experience, and may fittingly be introduced here :

" I feel as if I could scarcely go to bed to-night without saying a few words to thee, my very dear child, for though I find it difficult to get settled time for writing I have thought very much of thee since I had thy letter. I read it with great interest, and I desire to be very thankful for the mercy thou hast received. A fresh bond of affection and sympathy springs up between us. How can it be otherwise ? For very lively is my recollection of the time when the description thou hast given of thy previous self applied, perhaps, with greater force to *me*, and when all unsought and most undeserved, my eyes were

opened to see something of the sinfulness of my course, and those things in which I had delighted were made hateful to me—some sense was given of that wonderful love which gives hope to the most wretched, and in some weak measure the resolution was formed to seek and serve the Lord. In the many long years that have passed since then I have seen with far more clearness of how great importance was this turning point in life. I see now, as I could not then, the hand of a most merciful Father in many circumstances, and can a little more estimate the exceeding goodness and long-suffering which turned giddy feet out of the way to destruction. I see in looking back how much suffering might have been spared, how much less unworthily might the early covenant have been kept had I been more earnest, more faithful, and more willing to take up the cross. And as I have gone back over these things I have longed, my precious child, that the like gracious visitation extended to thee may be received and yielded to with full purpose of heart."

It must have been while she was very young that Ann Hunt's heart was thus touched, for in the journal above mentioned is found the following entry on the day after her sixteenth birthday—in 1826 :

"Enable me to become Thine, I beseech Thee, though it may cost me much ; throw down my idols, if I have any, that stand in the way, and oh ! let Thy devouring fire burn up the chaff."

And some years later her birthday petition was, "Give me, if it please Thee, light clearly to see my duty and grace to do it."

Henry Hunt, after leaving the firm of the Frys, was engaged in the wholesale tea trade, and was very prosperous for a time. He had removed to a house in what is called "The Royal Fort," a part of Bristol which derives its name from its having been a fortification in the time of the Civil War. The remaining portion of the Fort is entered by an old gateway, and within this stand several houses round a green. The one formerly occupied by Henry Hunt is large and roomy, and has an extensive garden. Here Ann Hunt had her home, passing through many changes and vicissitudes, from girlhood or early womanhood till she was sixty-four years of age. This house is now unoccupied, the carriage drive which used to run round the green is rough and overgrown, and some of the neighbouring buildings are used for institutions of different kinds.

Henry Hunt married again in 1829, his second wife being a widow of the name of Towell. She was an aunt of Edward Ash, M.D., of Norwich and Bristol. Martha Hunt had poor health, and lived but a few years. In 1834 Ann Hunt's father was married for the third time to Eliza, daughter of John Southall, of Leominster. She was a person of ability, of cultivated mind and dignified appearance and manners, and she became from that time the dominating force in the home at The Fort, exercising an influence which was in some ways elevating, but not possessing the gift of allowing free scope for the development and life work of those who had already reached

maturity before they came in some sort under her control.

But before this important change of circumstance took place another event had occurred which affected the lives of both sisters to an untold degree. In 1831, one of their brothers had married, and within a year afterwards his young wife died, leaving a little daughter, who while yet an infant of weeks was brought to The Fort and committed to Ann and Rebecca's care. Ann was not strong, and had been damaged by an accident when a child, so Rebecca was the more active nurse, but both cared tenderly for the little one, and she became the object of almost maternal affection. The introduction of this child into the family might have been, and was for a time, a source of vivid interest and much pleasure. But the girl proved unusually wayward and difficult to manage, with a violent temper and propensities hard to account for, and when she was about thirteen it was decided to make another arrangement—apparently suitable—and she was removed from her aunts' immediate care. As A. grew towards womanhood difficulties only increased, and her subsequent career was such as to cause her friends the keenest anxiety and distress. The story of this niece's life ran like a dark thread through the web of Ann Hunt's existence, and it will be needful later on to recur to it again. At the time now under review she had besides many other occupations and claims. Her brother Henry had married Catherine, daughter of Samuel Capper, of

Bristol, and had a numerous family, who, as well as other nephews and nieces were the objects of Ann Hunt's auntly interest during the greater part of her life. The earliest letter of hers that has been discovered is addressed in 1837 to Catherine Hunt, and there is another a few years later to the second Catherine, her brother's eldest daughter, who had pleased her by a childish epistle written when she was a little girl. There were also many family anxieties and troubles, some of them relating to the care of the invalid brother, whom Rebecca nursed with a devotion beyond her strength, and others which cannot be related here. It is true, as Ann Hunt said long afterwards, that the sorest troubles are not those which are known to those around us, and in which we receive their sympathy and kindness, but those which can be confided to God alone.

The records of many years are scanty, and chiefly confined to some memorandum books, not journals in the true sense of the word, but consisting of entries made occasionally. Such notes are apt to be mementoes of times of strongest feeling, and it is therefore possible that they convey an exaggerated impression of the sadness, which seems from various causes to have been the prevailing tone at this period and for long afterwards of Ann Hunt's mind and lot. Some letters to her sister, written during their occasional separation, certainly convey a more cheerful impression, and are interesting from their freedom of expression, and the touches of humour

with which her friends were familiar in later years. The fulness of these epistles, often written after retiring for the night, are suggestive of a long past day, when letters were less numerous but more carefully written than now. The note books before mentioned contain abundant evidence of deep earnestness in the religious life : they show the most ardent aspirations after holiness, and are tinctured with the self accusation then usual with Christians, who seemed to think that in writing bitter things against themselves they were best pleasing their Lord. The following, dated "26th of 10th month, 1851," shows her earnestness of spirit and her concern for others :

"In beginning a new year of my mortal existence I did afresh desire *one thing*, and all things else seemed as dross in comparison, that I might know Christ and be found in Him. Earnestly did I desire, and I make the record, that I may be reminded of the covenant then afresh entered into, that during the year now before me, or such days and weeks of it as may be given,—that this one thing may be my pursuit, the object of my desires, my prayers,—that if I be favoured to know any advance towards so blessed an experience, all the events of life however trying, however vexatious, may be taken quietly, thankfully. I desire to have no will about any of them but the will of the Lord, who may see meet to make me less dependent on human comfort or affection, that I may serve Him with more singleness of aim. Enable me to say, so be it, O Lord ! But oh that the souls of those dear to me may live in Thy sight. Oh the

inexpressible blessing that He who loves them equally, is ready to show to those who are yet afar off the tender mercy by which He drew me from hardness of heart and vanity to look unto Himself. For ever praised and adored be His holy name for this His goodness and for all that marvellous long-suffering whereby He has borne with me these many years since, and has not yet given me over unto death. Oh that in His loving-kindness He may pour out upon me of His spirit and make me a living member of Christ's body, a fruit-bearing branch in the vine, that so in humility and faith I may fulfil His gracious designs during the short remainder of my pilgrimage, and be instrumental in leading others to Him who has done so much for me. Thine is the word, Thine only is the power, and to Thee on earth and in heaven be all the glory."

It is clear from some of these memoranda that Ann Hunt was conscious of a call to the ministry from an early period of her life. As was usual amongst Friends fifty or sixty years ago, the prospect appeared to her an awful one, and the thought of its being required of her occasioned severe conflict. The time between the first thought of this line of service and its actual commencement was in her case much prolonged. The prevailing tone of opinion on the subject and her own special circumstances alike increased the difficulty; and in addition, the characteristic of her story—outward as well as inward—is *continuance*. In some lives and in some minds and hearts, much experience, much startling contrast between light and darkness, are compressed into a few years. The

remainder of such lives, though chequered with the ordinary vicissitudes of humanity, present nothing comparable to the early experience, but are comparatively calm and even. With Ann Hunt it was otherwise. Difficulties of outward circumstance, trials of the affections, acute anxieties and disappointments, events of the most painful import lasted on and on, or were scattered over long periods of time. It was the less remarkable that the spiritual history partook of the same character.

The picture of Ann Hunt's earlier and maturer life must not, however, be made too dark ; indeed the recollections of her friends supply much to relieve the shadows of her lot. She was always a bright and interesting companion, and had much enjoyment in social intercourse, and she was greatly attached to her sister, who, though not possessing her attractions, was a person of character, remarkably unselfish, and possessed of considerable mental independence. Ann's time was a good deal taken up in attendance on her stepmother, who was often an invalid and went frequently from home on that account ; she was thus introduced in part into the circle of Eliza Hunt's friendships with superior people, and she no doubt profited by the association. There are but few now who can remember her in early womanhood. Those who can recall her in middle life remember a pale smooth face often lit up by a sweet smile, with fine eyes of shaded grey, which were capable of a great deal of expression. She was always dressed

in the plain garb of a Friend, which became her well, was of middle height till bent with age and weakness, and had a pleasant voice and an affectionate gracious manner, which invited confidence in those with whom she came in contact. She took much interest in those younger than herself, and had a faculty of finding out any who were needing help or sympathy in matters of religious experience; with these she would seek and make opportunities of conversation, so that to them she was more accessible than to some of her contemporaries, who found impediments in the way of much private intercourse. She had from an early period much pleasure in associating with Elizabeth and Hannah Southall, who were nieces of her step-mother. They were a good deal younger than herself, and the connection gave her the opportunity of forming friendships with them which partook of the character of relationships, and very true and helpful were the offices of friendship which they were enabled to render her in later times. The following to Elizabeth Southall is characteristic:

"11th mo. 2nd, 1854.

"And now my dear Bessie, I sit down with pleasure to send thee a few lines, for thou art indeed often affectionately remembered by Rebecca and me, with thy kind dear ways which often arise in the mind with a little cheer. . . . For my own part I have been sorry since thou left not to have made more of the time we were together. I think we might have been more to each other than we were, but I take blame to myself for a kind of stupifying

embarrassment, especially when surrounding circumstances are harassing, which, I cannot tell why, prevents me from mentioning subjects of deepest interest, and interferes with the quiet enjoyment of a friend. . . . The time which thou spent with us several years ago, marked by the occurrence of deeply sorrowful things, used often to come vividly before me when thou wast here, and the thought of what had been passed through since, the anxiety and labour and pain not to be told, the hopes and fears, and the result of all, seemed almost overwhelming. . . . But I wanted to tell thee, dear Bessie, that through all and after all I can in a feeble way bear testimony that the Lord is good, and His mercy endureth for ever, even when we do not see it, can scarcely believe it. He answers us not according to our complainings, our repinings and our fears, but according to His own loving-kindness, and even when the cherished desire of the heart is withheld, can and does sometimes fill the void and solace the pain, and even put into the mouth the new song of praise. So that the feeling is strong with me that nobody need despair or be overmuch discouraged. I do not know that it is thy tendency, but I know very well that we can little judge of what passes within by the circumstances without, or by the cheerfulness upon the surface ; and knowing too that through whatever different dealings with us, the same work has to be accomplished in each of us, a work not easy to our nature, I can well believe thou hast thy share, dear Bessie, of tribulation. Oh that we might together pursue the one end of life with full purpose of heart, desiring to regard all pursuits, all events, only in the light of eternity."

In a letter also written in 1854 to the same correspondent, she touches on a different theme :

" We have lately had the two volumes of Ruskin's 'Modern Painters' from the Book Society. It was the first time I ever had an opportunity of looking at them. . . . I have scarcely a right to have [an opinion] after so imperfect a reading, but I was greatly interested in the aim, and in many parts I think I gained some valuable new ideas as respects the subserviency of art to devotional feeling in the Christian age ; but I cannot help thinking his views of edifying the world at large by means of pictures, somewhat delusive, beautiful but unreal, with little, perhaps nothing, of Christianity in them, and so attractive and fascinating they are ; the vision put me a little in mind of the beautiful soap bubbles we used to blow when we were children ; for I cannot but fear it would be found almost as unsubstantial when coming in contact with the practical duties of life. I am afraid thou wilt think me too dull to appreciate him, and perhaps I do too nearly approach that class of lovers of the useful which he treats so disrespectfully."

Ann Hunt's time was not wholly occupied with home claims and cares, absorbing as they often were ; she took much interest in the affairs of the Society of Friends, was at one time Clerk of the Women's Monthly Meeting, and subsequently an Elder. In 1845, and for some years earlier and later, she was Superintendent of the Girls' First-day School, sharing it, however, with another Friend, and attending only every other week. The School was held then as

now near the Friends' Meeting-house, in a room afterwards divided into class-rooms, and still in use in that form. It seems curious that many of the teachers also attended alternately at that time. It was when as a young teacher taking a class occasionally, that I first knew Ann Hunt, in any way but as an older Friend in the same Meeting. I remember that her gentle earnest influence was felt, and that she was looked up to by the teachers ; and I recall also, what will not surprise those who knew her in later years, that her Scripture questions, addressed to the whole school, had a depth and thoughtfulness which was not quite understood by the girls, who answered better when her colleague examined them merely on matters of fact. Some seven years later the acquaintance between Ann Hunt and myself was deepened, the wise and loving woman having approached the young Friend, as she did many others, with sympathy and interest in the difficulties of the spiritual life. She seemed not to seek for interviews, and never forced confidence, but would take advantage of a walk to visit a Sunday scholar or for some similar object, to lead the conversation to subjects of deepest moment, and to give the word in season as she well knew how to do. Some of her words spoken on such occasions, with the tone in which she uttered them, remain in the memory after many changeful years.

As illustrating her dealings with others in matters of religious experience, the following extracts from letters to two of her nieces may be given :

"26th of 5th month, 1860.

"My Very Dear Nieces,

[Catherine and Rebecca Hunt.]

"I do not know that I have anything to say to you that seems worth sitting down to write a note about, but you are so often in my thoughts, with so much love and thankfulness on your account, that I feel as if I should like to tell you that though there may be little expression of it, my heart is truly with you in affectionate feeling and sympathy. It does appear to be so great a mercy that the blessed Saviour's call has been heard by you each—that you have been, as I trust, enabled to hear His voice and to 'open the door,' and that in the precious sense granted of His love, there has been known something of the experience described in the condescending words which follow, even though you may hesitate to apply them to yourselves. These things are indeed so great a blessing, how can we be sufficiently thankful? I am ready to say, 'What can we render?' And is not this the language of your hearts, though perhaps sometimes with fear and misgiving? I cannot say how earnest is the desire that nothing may be permitted to mar the work so graciously and hopefully begun. It makes the heart sink to think how often the blessed work *is* marred, and if not wholly frustrated, grievously checked and interfered with to the unspeakable loss and suffering of individuals and of the church. But it is not our compassionate Lord's design that it should be so with you dear girls, or with any of us. Let us seek to keep close to Him with watchfulness and prayer, that we may know and do His will, avoiding most carefully

everything of whatever kind, or however unimportant it may appear, which tends to draw away the heart, to bring a cloud over the spirit, and weaken the ability to trust and hope in Him. Oh that we might continually lay all as upon His altar, and offer up all that we are and have to the service of our God and Saviour. As I write I feel deeply unworthy, and see my own exceeding need of that which I desire for you. I sometimes think it would be a comfort if we could have a little quiet time together occasionally for reading and conversation, but there seems to be no way for it at present, and far is it from my thought that you need any such help as mine. This note was begun days ago, but being often interrupted was laid by. I think I will give it to you in token of the affectionate interest and love of your truly attached aunt,

"A. H."

To her niece Anne M. Hunt.

"'The Fort.' [No date.]

"My Very Dear Anne,

"It seems a long time since we saw each other or had any direct communication, but I hope and believe that on neither side has there been forgetfulness. It has been a trial to keep away from you during dear Kate's illness and thy own, and often indeed have we thought affectionately and sympathisingly of you. . . . I desire to be very thankful that you are all restored, or nearly so, and that the malady does not spread further, but it is a fresh proof how uncertain life and health are, even to the young and strong. I felt the separation from thee more, dear girl, because it was so long since we had any intimate communication, and I longed to know

how thou wast feeling. Perhaps at the worst there was little ability for reflection, . . . but I do not doubt there have been times when the realities of the life to come and the *un*realities of this present life have been seen afresh—when there has been a fresh desire that life and strength if given again might be more devoted to His service and glory who claims thee for His own. Now, my dear child, if this be so, and if sometimes in looking forward thou art 'discouraged because of the way,' I feel as if I could so sympathise and understand thy feelings. This quiet evening, when I happen to be alone, the thought of thee is so dear and precious to me, that I long to say a word of encouragement, in the full belief that thou art under the best teaching and discipline, and that goodness and mercy are following, and will follow thee through what may sometimes feel a difficult and wearisome path. It has been especially sweet and helpful to myself lately to endeavour to realise the great privileges bestowed upon us through the Gospel, freely given to all who seek them aright, notwithstanding our exceeding unworthiness and unfitness by nature. Those are wonderful words: 'God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.' 'As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God,' and if we know anything of this, through His great mercy, or even do earnestly desire to know it, may we not look on the events of life in quite a different light from that they would otherwise appear in? All the trials, little or great, tiresome occurrences, uncongenial intercourse, or whatever may fall in our way, is it not all sweetened and elevated by the thought that all form part of the discipline by which we are being

taught, and may all, even things apparently hurtful and trying to our best feelings, be made to conduce to our growth in grace. It may be, dear, that thou art not feeling the need of these considerations at the present time. If so, lay this aside, and may He who knows thy need teach thee Himself, bless thee, and make thee a blessing."

To the same (no date).

"Thy little note was very acceptable, my dear Anne. I like to know something of thy feelings and hope it may not be unprofitable for either of us to be able to partake a little in them. And truly I can well enter into that dread of lukewarmness which sometimes troubles thee. I do not know of anything more fearful than the thought of gradually falling away from what one has known of the highest good, and becoming careless and worldly. . . . I would desire to encourage thee, my dear child, to cherish that sense of the divine love and goodness bestowed upon thee at times, resting upon this tender mercy in undoubting confidence that He who hath begun the good work in thee will carry it on even to His praise, and looking unto Him day by day and hour by hour that thou mayst see how to act in this carrying on of His work. In thinking of thee as well as of my own great need, those words in 1 John, ch. v. have been very encouraging: 'And this is the confidence, . . . that if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us.' Now we know that it is His will that we should be His earnest self-denying followers, that we should not be overcome by our soul's enemies, but be of those to whom the victory is given through Jesus Christ our Lord. And what precious encouragement this is, to

ask and to believe that He hears, and reverently to expect that our petitions will be granted. It is my hope that thou wilt be given to know more and more of this precious experience and that neither heights nor depths, things present nor things to come, will be able to separate thee from His love. So may it be, my beloved Anne, is the desire of

"Thy truly affectionate Aunt,
"A. H."

To her niece Rebecca Hunt.

1860. "Truly I have thought affectionately and sympathisingly of thee since that letter was received describing a state of mind with which too many of us are well acquainted. Perhaps it has passed by, leaving only, I would hope, a deeper sense of the emptiness and evil of self and the freeness and greatness of the grace by which alone any can grow as branches in the vine. Truly all is of unmerited mercy, yet let us not be content, let us not 'give sleep to our eyes' while conscious that the struggle with evil is not maintained. . . . Think, my dear child, of the vows that are upon thee, of all the goodness and favour of which thou hast been permitted to partake, and ask afresh the ability to give thyself, body, soul and spirit, to Him who has formed thee for His own praise. Then even if it may not be permitted thee to enjoy much sensible refreshment, and the feeling of thy own poverty may be humiliating, yet peace will be given, and after a little season it may be, the beams of heavenly light and comfort may again shine with greater brightness."

To the same (no date).

"I do affectionately feel for the trial connected with thy inner life in the painful sense given thee that a snare lurks even in the duties called for from thee, and that thy heart is by this means cleaving unto the dust. Yet, my dear child, I am ready to think that the battle to be fought must be encountered there through the might of Him who can give the victory,—that thy heart must be cleansed of its idols, not by running away from those lawful things which usurp an unlawful place there, but by so yielding to the new creation in Christ Jesus that thy affections will know their true object and He will rule and reign over all in thy heart. If it be not so, change of place and duty would not cure the evil. The same love of self and undue desire for approbation, which are a temptation to thee now, would recur probably under more difficult and enthralling circumstances in any other family. . . . Once again, dearest R., draw near before Him whose service thou hast entered. He knows thy temptations. Ask of Him for thy Saviour's sake that He will enable thee to hold all things as a trust from Him, that whatever thou do it may be thy aim to do it to His glory. And then devote thyself afresh to the duties of the day, looking unto Jesus. . . . Remember thou art not thy own. So wilt thou find a growing willingness in sharing thy cherished duties with a sister, in watching the opportunity to put forward anyone who is discouraged or unskilful into some little cheering service—in laying thyself out for the performance of some duty less delighted in, from which others shrink. Especially would I commend to thee a deep affectionate interest

in thy brothers, whose position individually is of so much importance—for the younger ones especially. Try to make them feel thee to be their friend and use the influence with which thou art entrusted for their best welfare and happiness. So, dear R., thou wilt find a field of abundant labour until it shall please Him who graciously directs the paths of those who acknowledge Him in their ways, to place thee in a different position. Mayst thou be privileged to walk now and hereafter in the light of His countenance.

"Ever thy most affectionately attached Aunt,

"A. H."

To Catherine Hunt, Jun.

"Clifton" (no date).

"I am much interested in your reading Madame Guyon. I was going to ask thee what books thou found most comfort and benefit in, and will take this for an answer, though I fear it may not be exactly so from thy remark about the discouraging contrast with such good people. It is a feeling most of us are well acquainted with, though I am afraid it is a result of faithlessness and pride—two enemies hard to be overcome. Yet knowing them to be enemies, and their suggestions not to be trusted or yielded to, let us rather remember that the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him, that our blessed Saviour came not only that we might have life, but have it more abundantly. I should very much like for thee to tell me some time and in some way, a little more about the time when that great change came over thee, which made itself so manifest in countenance and manner as to need no information that it had taken place. Then, dear Kate, I trust thou didst

in reality cease to live to thyself, though the old habits of mind do not at once give way. I was struck with a remark made the other day by the mistress of this house, when telling us of a brother who had been brought under the influence of religion by means of Miss Marsh in London; she spoke of his much greater affection for and interest in her and his other relations since that time. 'While we are in the world,' she said, 'we are strangers to one another,' and it is too often so.

"Thy very affectionate Aunt,
"A. H."

It may strike the reader that the counsel contained in these and some other of Ann Hunt's letters is rather "old-fashioned," and truly it reminds one occasionally more of Thomas à Kempis than of any recent writers on religious experience. Yet even so it may find a response in some hearts; and at the least there is evidence of the warm affection and tender sympathy which gave the writer so much power.

CHAPTER II.

"There is no Friendship like a sister's
In calm or stormy weather
To cheer one on the tedious way,
To fetch one if one goes astray,
To lift one if one totters down,
To strengthen while one stands."

Christina Rossetti.

IN 1862, Ann Hunt's father died at an advanced age. He had a somewhat ruling spirit, a quaint mode of expression, and possessed altogether a marked individuality of character, with some of the characteristics of a Friend of the old school. About three years later an event occurred which made a great change in his daughter Ann's life. This was the death of Rebecca, her only sister. Ann had never been strong, and seemed in her early womanhood very seriously out of health. From this condition she recovered, having, as was afterwards proved, considerable capacity for endurance, and recuperative power. But she was never equal to great exertion in consequence of the accident before mentioned, and her kind and unselfish sister was always accustomed, in anything requiring physical strength, to take the harder task. Now, however, her own health began to fail, and before long her

case, obscure at first, was pronounced by the physicians to be of a hopeless character. A letter addressed in May, 1865, to Elizabeth and Hannah Southall, gives a touching account of her illness and death :

"How often, my dearly loved cousins and friends, has my heart—have our hearts—turned to you since this great affliction was recognised, with a sense that few could feel with us as you would. On the day before the notes so expressive of this were received, we were talking of you. 'Ah,' dearest R—— said, '*they know*, they know we must be passing through deep waters.' And so indeed we were. It was then a time of deep conflict and distress, the truth in all its awfulness and sorrow beginning to be realised by each of us. We were mercifully dealt with, and the deep waters were not permitted to overwhelm, yet it was a time of feeling such as no words can describe. You have heard of my precious sister's generally calm and peaceful state.. There was, however, a very marked change in the course of her illness,—for at first, though she bore the intelligence of fatal disease with surprising composure, and for a while seemed more occupied with thoughts of the result for others than herself, she maintained the same way of speaking of her own feelings as she had done in health—as utterly cold and lifeless, unable to realise her interest in redeeming love and mercy. She felt there was a great work to be done—her strength was failing, how could it be accomplished? Not that she doubted infinite power and love, but she could not take hold. I know not how these seasons of anguish would have been supported but

for the hope granted me, and the strong faith of your beloved aunt, that she would not be taken away under this cloud. And when ability was given to *feel* something of the pardoning love of which she had so often heard, the change wrought was all the more inexpressibly comforting from the previous lifelong experience. The blessing came gently and gradually, but the effect could not be mistaken. The feeling acknowledgment in words did not bear stronger witness than the altered frame of mind. Patient she always was, most thoughtful of others and anxious for their benefit, very affectionate; but there were points in which a great change was manifest, and she was enabled to leave all the future as regards herself and others in a loving confidence that He who had been so gracious to her would do all things well.

"The thought of our separation, and my path in life without her, was at first almost more than she could bear, but the same thankful submission was wrought in this. She would allude to the trials possibly in store, but 'hold fast,' she would say, 'cling close,' and often do her loving injunctions sound as it were again in my ears. No one scarcely could bear a stronger testimony to the free, unmerited mercy of God through Jesus Christ, than it was her privilege to do. She 'longed to magnify it'; these were her words of tenfold meaning as coming from her. She longed that she could in any way show forth His praise, 'bring glory to Him' whose wondrous love she scarcely dared to appropriate to her most unworthy self. Such things she would say almost inaudibly, often after those turns of exhaustion which grew more and more distressing till the last came, and did its allotted work. At these times, she said,

encouraging texts of Scripture would be presented to her mind with much comfort. 'Him that cometh to me,' 'Underneath are the Everlasting Arms,' 'I have blotted out as a thick cloud,' etc., 'I will never leave thee'; these were some she mentioned. But, as the powers of life grew lower, and the suffering condition of the body required more constant attention, there was less sensible perception of things unseen. She lamented it sometimes with discouragement, but I think she never lost hold of the precious hope in her Saviour,—and the sweet tranquillity with which she signified her belief that 'the time of release must be near,' when I was called to her for the last time, bore witness to the support granted to the end.

"And now, beloved friends, when I view in this way my precious sister's experience, and recall my own,—how every feeling seemed swallowed up in the desire for blessing upon her, and in thankfulness for that blessing, when I think of her sorrowful weary life, under the pressure of causes mental and bodily, and of the unutterable mercy bestowed upon her, as I venture to believe, and pray that I may be permitted yet more to realise—how is my selfish sorrow checked. How do I long that I might take up the ascription of praise begun by her feeble voice, and magnify the grace bestowed on both of us in that time of sore extremity. These are my feelings not unfrequently, marking as I still do the mercy mingled in this dispensation, thankful especially for the measure of comfort granted in my mother's sympathy and union of feeling. Yet is the rending exceeding hard to natural love, and the close binding together of not short lives. The loss of her faithful, understanding, always to be trusted affection, her kind,

considerate, self-sacrificing care, must indeed take much of the earthly solace from life. It can never be, as you say, the same to me again, but life is short—may be very short to me; I hope I may be able to take a right interest in its concerns, but at present it feels almost as if there were but one event of interest in life, and that is *death*, with its inconceivable change, its unfathomable mysteries. . . . (Later) It has been a low day and I must be prepared for such, as the little business of the week comes round and round without her, and I have to realise what at first one cannot, that she is gone to return no more. You will know how desolate this room is, how the afternoons when we used to be together to help each other, to consult, to feel the blessing of our union,—how they feel now, recalling not only my much loved sister, but others gone, the dead and the living—twice dead! Oh dear cousins, prize your blessing in having each other, and help me to be thankful that she was taken and I am left; that in spite of this natural sorrow and loneliness, and through it all I have a precious life-long source of comfort, and a strong link with another world, where we all desire that our affections may be. . . . Under all circumstances equally,

"Your warmly attached and affectionate friend,

"A. H."

A year later she thus wrote:

To the same.

"I know you will have thought of the season come round again of so many affecting associations to me. It was as last Second-day that Dr. Symonds was called in, and gave the verdict of death, and as next Second-day that his visit was repeated, and his opinion

given that perhaps scarcely even weeks remained. Oh the conflicts that were passed through then, the bitter sorrow with which I looked out on the bright spring days like these, and walked perforce in the garden as now. But now the room upstairs is empty, and I have learned to realise what then seemed too hard to believe. I look back upon what then lay before in the unknown future, and feel, and oftener desire to feel, deeply thankful for all the mercy shown, and gracious upholding through the deep waters. It is hard to refrain from a sad looking forward now, but if I may venture to say 'Thou hast been my help' is there not ground to trust the petition will still be answered, 'Leave me not, neither forsake me,' most unworthy as I am. I cannot write to you, my very dear friends, superficially, and therefore must acknowledge that these last months have been a period of much conflict, of being permitted to feel even bitterly on account of the past and the present, and I scarcely know that at any period has a lower depth been reached than the beginning of this week, so that I have really looked upon the visits of our dear friends ——and—— as a little help granted in time of need."

The account of Rebecca Hunt's last days, as given in the former letter, will impress many as painful, since it is clearly implied that her want of confidence and the assurance of hope was no passing cloud, such as sometimes darkens the mind of the faithful Christian when there first opens before him the immediate prospect of death, but rather that it had been the characteristic of the previous experience. Some allowance must be made for natural tempera-

ment and depressing circumstances. Much was probably due to these, and more to the prevailing habit of mind on religious subjects. There was then amongst Christians a dread of presumption, a tendency to look within for signs of faith and grace, combined among Friends especially with a great fear of disobedience to the dictates of the Holy Spirit, so that it seemed as if some earnest souls never gained the courage of faith, and continued, while leading devout and exemplary lives, to know little of the cheerful confidence and deep peace which are part of the Saviour's legacy to those who love Him. Had it not been thus with Rebecca Hunt her sorrowful life might have been less sad, and she would have had earlier opportunities of magnifying the love and mercy in which at last she rejoiced. I have myself a vivid recollection of the way in which Ann Hunt spoke of her sorrow soon after her sister's death. She touched on their mutual affection and unity of feeling, saying that "no one could have lost more," but added that when she thought of her sister's troubles and how they weighed upon her, she could only be thankful that she had laid her burdens down. The survivor was not, as she had imagined, to have a short journey without the companionship of a sister-friend. More than thirty years were to pass ere she, too, was to reach the bourne of life ; for the blessing of many she was to live to old age, and to find that those who give their love freely to others are never really lonely, never uncared for nor unloved.

The following recollections by Samuel Southall of Leeds, refer so much to this period of Ann Hunt's life that they may suitably be introduced here :

"My first recollections of my dear friend and cousin date back nearly sixty years, when she and her sister Rebecca paid more than one visit to the little town of Leominster, where I was brought up. The only impression left on my mind was of her gentleness and love. I felt she understood boys and felt for them.

"I next remember her when a school-boy. I was for two and a half-years at a school at Thornbury, about nine miles from Bristol. During this time my uncle and aunt, Henry and Eliza Hunt, frequently invited me to The Fort for two or three days together. On the occasion of these visits much of my time was spent in the parlour, which was specially occupied by Ann and Rebecca Hunt. I was a shy boy, not in strong health, and I was not happy at school. This made me the more grateful for sympathy, and I soon found out that Ann Hunt had a wealth of it to bestow, and that she was ready to take a warm interest in all that was interesting to me. I think that ever since that time we have corresponded with more or less regularity.

"My next reminiscence which is worth recording refers to a visit paid to The Fort in the year after Rebecca Hunt's death. I shall never forget one afternoon, when Ann Hunt and I were left alone, and she told me all the circumstances of her sister's death. The

comparatively calm way in which she spoke, and yet the evidence of intense feeling which her words conveyed were indescribable. That evening, sitting with my aunt and Ann Hunt, I thoughtlessly asked the latter to read aloud Jean Ingelow's 'Divided.' As I write this long years after I can recall the tone in which the words were read :

'Glistens the dew and shines the river,
Up comes the lily and dries her bell,
But two are walking apart for ever,
And wave their hands in a mute farewell.

* * * * *

Farther, farther, I see it—know it—
My eyes brim over, it melts away,
Only my heart to my heart shall show it
As I walk desolate day by day.'

"How cruel I was to ask for the reading of that poem! When I heard of the death of my dear friend and cousin, almost my first thought was,—now the sisters are together once more. I have no doubt Ann Hunt never lost the sense of her loss, and yet the succeeding years of her life were not unhappy. As she said of herself, 'My heart has been formed with capacity to feel sorrow deeply, but also has the power been given to rise above the weights and burdens, and to enjoy the blessings given with a keen and thankful joy.'

"During the remainder of her life, I only met Ann Hunt occasionally, and our lives were so busy that we rarely exchanged letters oftener than once a year, but I always felt that her love to me and my

wife was just the same, and when these letters did come they were overflowing with interest, showing not only how complete was her grasp of what was passing in the philanthropic and religious world, but how every detail of our family and personal interests was retained in the memory. The last two or three letters were written in a feeble and faltering hand, and then I received messages only through her amanuensis. Now she is 'at home with the Lord.' Looking back on our intercourse I feel that only once in a lifetime are men usually permitted to have such a friendship as hers."

There are but scanty memorials of the next few years. Catherine Hunt, Jun., was at Saffron Walden for some years, in attendance on the declining days of the late Priscilla Green. A few extracts may be given from her aunt's letters to her during that time.

"The Fort, 7th month 7th, 1868.

"I was very much interested by what thou told me of the remarks on the Epistle to young Friends in the Yearly Meeting. . . . It does seem so truly desirable that every right exercise of spirit, every honest effort for the advancement of the blessed Redeemer's kingdom, should be acknowledged and owned as far as it can be done by those who have been more largely taught in His school. . . . It is remarkable indeed how strong the current has been running of late on the subject of women's ministry. I suppose the rapid decline in the number so engaged has turned attention to the subject."

The same topic is resumed in a later letter, bearing postmark October 26th, 1868 :

"Thou remarked how much the ministry of women was dwelt on in the Yearly Meeting, and how much encouragement was given in that direction. The same view has been brought before Friends very much of late in different ways, and seems to have excited much concern in the Meeting of Ministers and Elders. It does indeed seem remarkable that while the place of women in the Church is being more acknowledged among Christians in general, our Society should seem to be retrograding in practice, and often in individual opinion. But the root of the deficiency seems to me to lie deeper than can be affected by any of the encouragement or persuasion, of which one is sometimes a little afraid. There are doubtless some faithlessly holding back, and experiencing that poverty to which they are contributing in the Church ; but in the main is there not a want of *the preparation of the heart?* . . . It is a cause for thankfulness that some press through, and make proof of their allegiance by public offerings, accepted by their Master as such, when perhaps not much beyond is required ; for it has long seemed to me that if things were as they should be, that very marked line of separation between ministers and others to which we have been accustomed would not be drawn ; that when a company of worshippers sit down together, it would not be almost certain that one or two would speak and all the rest he silent, but that now and then, especially when the more gifted are absent, there may be a lively and acceptable expression of Christian concern or sympathy, or

utterance of the petitions which live in the heart, even though much exercise in the office of a Gospel minister may never be designed. I hope thou wilt not mistake me, dear, nor suppose I would lower the true standard in any wise. The voice must be heard the same, the call real, though the service may be different in extent, and as such requiring perhaps a different course of spiritual preparation or training. . . . Barclay and —— must be left I think ; I do not quite unite with either, presumptuous as it seems—I mean as to the interpretation of texts ; but it is a blessing to be preserved from much anxiety or perplexity about these differences of view—seeking to follow that which brings peace to our own souls, and looking to Him who is the unerring Teacher and Guide, *whose cause it is*."

As regards the work of the ministry, neither of the hindrances hinted at in the foregoing letter applied to Ann Hunt herself ; it is impossible to attribute to her conscious unfaithfulness or want of preparation of heart. Yet, as has been said before, something had hindered her for many years ; partly, it may be, her natural timidity and tendency to self-depreciation, and partly the degree in which she was habitually influenced by the opinions of others. The first time that she actually spoke in a meeting for worship appears to have been at Clevedon, where she was staying for the improvement of her health about 1873. The following remarks contained in a letter to Hannah Southall allude to this, or possibly to a subsequent occasion in Bristol :

"Most thankfully would I tell thee, beloved sister and sharer in my sombre experiences, that with renewed natural strength and spirit has come the far richer blessing of light in the dwelling. Something more of liberty of spirit was granted during my stay from home, and I look back to last First-day evening as a time of breaking of bonds—with the deepest humiliation, yet with solemn thankfulness altogether beyond words; and it is no more in my power to doubt the evidence of Divine merciful owning than it would be to question whether the sun shone in the morning, or whether the darkness of night still continued. Ask for me, my beloved friend, when thou canst, that the help I so urgently need may yet be granted, that no slavish bonds may again fetter my spirit, but that while it is yet day any little service in doing or suffering may be fulfilled to the glory of my Lord."

Some time before this an event had occurred which lightened a heavy burden of anxiety and sorrow borne patiently for many years. The niece whose childhood had been spent at The Fort and whose course had occasioned so much distress, was married actually from her aunt's home and under her care in the autumn of 1872. There seemed a reasonable prospect of happiness in the future, and as was hoped, tokens of improvement in A. herself; and though troubles and disappointments were yet to come, something had been really gained, and for a time the alleviation was great and most thankfully received.

Early in 1873 Ann Hunt became a member of a committee appointed to meet with Friends, and

especially young Friends, as invited to do so, and to have communication with them on religious subjects. She was prevented by home circumstances from taking her full share in this service, but she was greatly interested in it, and the visits in which she took part were the means of developing the powers of sympathy and influence which were later on to come so fully into play.

The health of Eliza Hunt, always precarious, was failing seriously in these later years, and Ann Hunt was much engaged in attendance upon her, assisted from time to time by Hannah Southall, whose timely aid on many occasions earned her the title of "Partner," so often afterwards given her by her much tried friend. At length, after a distressing illness, the object of so much care, the invalid of many years, died at an advanced age in April, 1874. Ann Hunt wrote thus to Hannah Southall about two months after :

"First-day afternoon.

"Thy sweet note is most cheering—comes in so seasonably on this day of something like funeral stillness and recollections. I seem to be passing through the parting now, in the solitary walks and such a long, long look back among places and things having touching, yes, far more associations. But how mercifully have the wounds been healed—is the bitterness tempered ; and thy cordial, loving greeting bringing me heart to heart with you again, came like a beam of sunshine. I am so glad it is likely to suit you for

me to come soon, but the time for leaving Bristol is a little uncertain."

She seems to have left The Fort the day after this was written, taking refuge at first with Hannah C. Price, the faithful friend of many years. This Friend was remarkable for her Christian benevolence, which was shown in an unusual way. She had at different times adopted several orphans, for whom she cared in the kindest manner, and she had also taken charge of two motherless children, whose father was in a foreign land. One of these, a young man just starting in life, had died at her house some years before. Ann Hunt had been greatly interested in him, and there still exists in MS. an account which she wrote of the experience of his last days. To those nearer to her H. C. Price had also rendered kind and timely assistance, and it seemed fitting that Ann Hunt should make this house her home until she had decided on one for herself, where she should begin life again independently and alone.

CHAPTER III.

"Thrice blest whose lives are faithful prayers,
Whose loves in higher love endure;
What souls possess themselves so pure?
Or is there blessedness like theirs?"

Tennyson.

THE year 1874 marks a change in Ann Hunt's life, which is manifest in the tone of her correspondence. This was more extensive than it had been before, and from this time material would be abundant, but for the fact that few of her letters of the earlier dates appear to have been preserved. It was some time before a house was found that seemed to suit her requirements, but the letters written during this interval show little anxiety on this head. She wrote thus from H. C. Price's to Hannah Southall:

"12, South Parade, Clifton,

"2nd 10th mo., 1874.

"The house search seems almost at a standstill; there is nothing at all likely to look at, and some of my friends think I had better go into lodgings than take anything unsuitable. For the present it must be

left. To-morrow, if all's well, I go to Ashley Down,* and dear Maria Hayward writes that they shall be ready for me after this week, so I do not feel driven into lodgings just yet. Hast thou thought, dearest, that it is six months this very morning since thou and I stood and knelt by that bed for the last time? How vividly is the scene before me now, though it seems in the far longer past. . . . And then the turning away to a new phase of life begun already, new duties, new prospects—a weight which would have been overpowering but for the trust. Yes, dearest partner in it all, He is able to keep that which *we have committed to Him*, and from that day to this I can set my seal to the truth that He is able and abundantly willing to supply all our need. I need not tell thee that He has been very merciful and gracious unto me, short as I have fallen in an answerable walking, yet it has been so by the touch of His blessed Spirit upon my spirit, and by His gracious dealings outwardly [in] giving me thee and other dear loving friends in this time when I might otherwise have mourned for the dead and the living with a sense of desolation. . . . But I must not fill up paper and time in this way, I want to allude to some things in thy letter of true interest. . . . I am very glad I met Elizabeth Comstock and know her style and spirit better than I could otherwise. She has a great gift in her power over the minds and souls of others, exercised perhaps in rather a wholesale way, and so we must not be surprised if it lacks some of those finer touches, and that adaptation to one's Christian and natural tastes, which specially

* The home of her dear friend Catherine B. Charleton at that time.

endears and attracts personally—but perhaps this is my notion. . . . Do not think I fastidiously undervalue her. Thy account of her service among you gives a high impression of its character, and I wish she or anyone else could stir us up. But I do not like that statement about our being lost or saved and the results. I doubt if our human faculties are equal to that kind of crystallization of solemn mysteries into epigrammatic sentences without risk of error. We can, as thou said, cordially accept the first part, 'We are not saved because we do right,' but to say, 'We are not lost because we sin, but we sin because we are lost," seems to me almost in direct contradiction to Scripture teaching, and liable to some of the most deplorable results of what we call Calvinism. Is it not better to confine our statements to what we do know and most surely believe, which equally magnifies the free grace whereby and wherein alone we have any hope, and [to] encourage all to take hold of it, to accept the offered salvation, and to be created anew unto good works as His workmanship in Christ Jesus, without making startling assertions which cut two ways, disheartening the honest seeker after Christ, when only intended to warn the self-righteous? One shrinks so much from those hard keen lines of distinction some people try to draw in a region where there is no hold for them, where the darkness seems to dawn into the light, and the light shadow into the darkness by imperceptible degrees. I suppose we cannot conceive of any change taking place without there being some moment when the one condition passes into the other, but as respects that great change from the condition of the lost sinner to the sinner saved by grace, how often it is

beyond the power of any eye or spirit but that of the All-seeing to discern the time.* The apostle John says how they knew they had passed from death unto life, not in a way which betokened any sudden sense of change ; and while it does sometimes come in that way, I cannot think we are warranted in looking for it either in ourselves or one another, and I cannot but believe that every motive and every exhortation and entreaty may be brought to bear on those who we fear are not yet within the fold, without judging them in that way or insisting that they shall judge themselves. But I did not mean to write so many words on these most deeply interesting, inexplicable points. There is no need of more darkening of counsel, so I hope thou wilt not let any words of my unwisdom have that effect. How much more does one grain of experience do for us than mountains of talk and controversy ; yet I like very much to know thy thoughts on these things."

A little before this she had written to the same correspondent about another religious teacher of the day :

"Very comforting to me was thy letter from M., and much indeed should I have liked to share in some of the occasions of deep interest of which thou spoke. As to Hannah Whitall Smith and her

* It seems to be a mistake arising partly from pre-conceived theological ideas, and partly from the over-pressing of certain figures and analogies, to say that there must necessarily be such a "moment." If there has been none such to the consciousness of a person who is nevertheless in hopes, beliefs, and affections a true Christian, why inquire into the matter at all? To say nothing of cases where there has never been a time of actual rebellion against God, how can we talk of the moment of change in the eyes of Him to whom the future is open, and who sees His returning child when he is yet afar off?—Ed.

teaching, I should be indeed grieved to think she was not fulfilling a mission on which a blessing largely rests, yet it will remain that there are those whose line or stage of experience does not enable them so to appropriate the truth she urges as to make it their own, and when this is at any time the case there must be a chill in the failure. But what a comfort it is that the warmth and light for which we long is not in the keeping of any man or body of men to bestow or to withhold, and perhaps it will be one of the instructive lessons which some of those dear young friends will have to [learn] when the reflected warmth of this contact shall cool among the hard common things of life, and they will have to discover as for themselves, or rather know it to be revealed even to them, what it is to know the precious legacy of our Lord to be abidingly theirs. I long that we may not lose sight of the reality of the promised blessing, either in the tangle of words wherein some desire to set it forth, or in our own experience of the things which hinder the possession. Among these truly is that physical trial to which thou alluded—nerves strung to painful sensitiveness, refusing to be stilled. I have often felt it so consoling to remember that He, our blessed Master, knows equally and can equally cure the suffering which arises from each department of our wonderful complex being; that He can see and understand and compassionate what our fellow men are disposed to blame, and does in His infinite love hold out the hand of help, give the healing balm—little, perhaps, as we can do for ourselves, *except* by avoiding those efforts and endurances which overtax the brain and nerves; and the endeavour to cast ourselves upon His healing

and compassionate love will assuredly be blessed to ourselves and those around."

Early in 1875, the dear friend with whom Ann Hunt had been for the most part since her own old home had been broken up, Hannah C. Price, died at the age of eighty-six. She was not only a succourer of many, but had in past years helped the sisters, Ann and Rebecca Hunt, in straits in which their other friends felt powerless to assist. At the time of her death she had residing with her a valued Friend named Phyllis Rowe. She and Ann Hunt were much attached to each other, and when the time came for the latter to make a new home, it was Phyllis who was with her on her first entrance on it. The house ultimately decided upon was situated in an old-fashioned square in Bristol. It had the advantage of being near the Friends' Meeting-house, and as there was a green in front and a strip of garden behind, it was not so close or confined as many other situations. There were, of course, drawbacks to a residence so completely in town, but perhaps they were more evident in later years. For a long time she rejoiced in being able to walk to meeting, and some of her friends found her dwelling a delightful resting place, where they could enjoy her company in the intervals between different engagements. To herself the entrance upon this position was a great event, the more so that she had passed the age of sixty-four before she thus attained to anything like independence. Something of her feelings may be

gathered from the following extracts from letters written at the time :

To Hannah Southall. 1875.

" The changes and surprises are indeed great, and it will take long, perhaps too long, to be ever learnt before I feel that time and servants and rooms and all the materials of daily life are really under my control. How do the responsibilities as well as the trials of life, inward and outward, change as we pass on. Some of my fresh causes of thought and feeling I hope some time to tell you of—not of special interest to tell ; but it seems as if the cup of life would be filled, it may be perhaps with a different mixture from that I am now tasting."

And, again, in the prospect of a visit from a Friend :

" It seems so strange and new to me to be able to offer such accommodation that I have almost to go through a process of reasoning to convince myself of the fact. But this occurs continually in one way or other, sometimes in a very different sphere, bringing a sense of responsibility over my spirit which can only lead to the one spot where burdens are laid down, or strength renewed to bear them. I go on in much feebleness, yet with a precious sense of a Saviour near, mighty to save. It looks large to write, and in my exceeding weakness is it too much to say? But then, the weakness only makes the blessing more precious and dear, and I can only long that everyone who feels weak and tempest tossed might come to the waters, come to the shadow of a great Rock, come to the strong for strength. Oh ! that the

reality of these things may be more and more known by us all."

To Hannah Southall.

"9, Brunswick Square, 1875.

"A line, dear H., to go with this which was found in the drawing room. . . . Much do I think of you still in loving interest, though now for a time our paths divide. Mine is in the old track again, but in a large measure exempted from the thorns and briars of former years, though there is the constant need of care and watching, and resort to the place of refuge and strength."

It could not have been long after settling into her house that it was opened for a little gathering, held under the appointment of a "Pastoral Committee," of which Ann Hunt was a member. In reference to this she wrote :

To Elizabeth Southall.

"I have been trying to get the drawing-room ready for a meeting we are intending to hold to-morrow evening with Friends who are mothers of young children. We shall probably number twenty-two or twenty-three, to take tea at six. Think of us if thou canst, for the prospect seems rather heavy. It is the first gathering in that room since it was mine. May it be blessed. . . . Scarcely at all have I felt the marvellous change that has passed more than in putting the drawing-room to rights. The things fresh as it were from her hand—where is she now, and why am I here? Wonderful thoughts, but I must leave more that I want to say."

To Hannah Southall.

"7th month 10th, 1875.

"My last to thee, dearly loved sister and friend, has remained as unfinished in my mind ever since. So many things I did not say and have not said, and the wheel of life goes round so fast that it is impossible to catch that which is flying off day by day, superseded by other interests and feelings. Yet there are some which abide, and ever must, and some of these my heart calls up as I turn to thee, loving and faithful as I have proved thee under many a trial. Ah, my friend, touching the Almighty we cannot find Him out. Truly in many ways His thoughts and ways are not as ours, and yet He leadeth by a right way, and bringeth the tempest-tossed to the desired haven. And so it is that He condescends to employ us who feel so utterly unworthy and unfit, to do here and there a little service for Him, and to send light and warmth into our souls, as He did to thee in that cottage meeting and at that time. O hold fast by Him, as the ever compassionating, ever present, ever helping Saviour and Friend, and never mind the tossings; do not believe in the dark hours, or the dark thoughts, for is not He near who is our light and our salvation? Why should we be afraid? I think I have felt these blessed things more than ever of late, though poor, and failing, and stumbling often alas, yet also at times conscious of a gracious help and a blessed guidance far beyond any of my own poor resources.

"Thou asked about our Pastoral Tea. Though several of the invited were unavoidably absent, we were about eighteen who passed the evening together; several who have large young families of

rather the less privileged class, with some in very different circumstances. (Besides several before mentioned) Susanna Gayner, both Committee Friend and object of the meeting, was with us—but we eschewed the men. Truly it was a time of much feeling; after a little reading, and something more directly of a meeting character, there was a tolerably free conversation on points connected with the training of young children, the degree in which 'unconditional obedience' should be enforced, the best way of inculcating religious truth and feeling, the needs of the mother herself, etc. I believe it was felt to be a profitable and enjoyable time. Many said so, and some tears said more than words. I wish something of the kind could be kept up in freshness. This week there was to be a meeting for children, and the 'Children's Epistle' read, but I have not heard of it yet. . . . It felt very strange to have such a company at my own house, and thankfully did I feel it as a time of (in a sort) public dedication, as truly I had longed to dedicate it and all the means given me to His service who has brought me hitherto, during the short remainder of my life. I often think of thy kind droll exhortations to live at Westbury or somewhere out of the way of things; and advice of that nature still comes in which I hope to bear in mind. It is a great comfort and blessing to have a quiet useful home. Thus far I am increasingly satisfied with the situation, and with being alone, though it has yet been but little that this has been the case. I think I shall do better if health is granted, to have the freedom of no other inmate, and the entire rest. But I hope to do whatever seems to be ordered day by day."

It was indeed late in life for Ann Hunt to attain full liberty of action, and the power to follow without hindrance the lines of service to which she was especially called. But little as it might have been expected she had before her more than twenty years of loving service. Her home was, in a sense, solitary for many years, though from time to time it became a shelter to relatives who were sorrowful or distressed, but even when she was alone she could not be said to dwell in solitude. So many sought her company or came to her for sympathy or counsel, that when later on her friend Phyllis Rowe began to pay her lengthened visits, she used to say that there was scarcely room or time for her companionship. Ann Hunt received all—and they were people of every variety of character and position—with a kind and gracious bearing, patiently enduring interruptions which must sometimes have been untimely, and managing with wonderful tact and insight to enter into the feelings of her visitors, to gain their confidence and give them what they needed of sympathy and help. The party which has been described was the first of many more. Bible classes, meetings of ministers, committees of various kinds were often gathered in that "upper room."

About this time she began to speak more frequently in meeting, to the comfort and satisfaction of her friends, who rejoiced to welcome her definite entrance on this line of service. She was recorded a minister in the year 1876. A few words

as to her ministry, in this sense of the word, may not be out of place here. Her communications were marked by spirituality and deep reverence. They were varied in subject, and had much freshness, and, though simple in one aspect, were sometimes rather elaborate in thought. It might have been expected that a person of her deep experience, combined with mental power and considerable command of language, would have reached a higher level in the ministry, than, speaking after the manner of men, it can be said that she attained. She never lost a peculiar timidity of manner, and it is probable that the repression of her earlier life and the long retarded exercise of her gift were hindrances to its full development. She might have been more admired had it been otherwise, but it does not follow that her service would have been more blessed. Her words were valued for their own sake and for the evidence they bore of her close walking with God, as well as for the weight and humility with which they were uttered and their entire consistency with her life and conduct.

The following, addressed to Phyllis Rowe, alludes to her acknowledgment as a minister :

"There is another subject, which no circumstances can put out of mind, to which thou alluded, my beloved friend, which I must only just touch on. I believe thou understands my feelings, and so will know something of how I feel the solemn recognition, the added responsibility which seems coming upon me. Next Fourth-day it is to be spoken of finally, if

nothing interpose. May the dear Saviour, to whom we have desired to give ourselves, guide and rule over all. I feel it the more because our meeting is so different from ——, so few come forward, almost none of the young men and strong."

And the way in which she regarded the subject is shown in a letter, written somewhat later, to her friend Joseph Storrs Fry :

"The excessive dread of this kind of service which, combined with discouraging circumstances, kept back any expression during the best years of my life, does perhaps still produce the want of power to command my voice, which might be reasonably expected in my circumstances of age, etc. I do feel very thankful for the forbearance and the unity of my dear friends ; and feeling that the time for service must be short, and may be very short, it is my earnest desire to devote it unreservedly to Him who has so borne with my unfaithfulness, and has not cast me wholly out of His service. But especially my heart responds to thy desire that all personal considerations may give place to the endeavour to take our part in the work of the Lord ; and that by whatever means and through whatever instruments, it may be our prayer that His name may be exalted and the great need of men may be supplied."

Ann Hunt continued to correspond with her niece Catherine as long as she remained at Saffron Waldon, where she was attending Priscilla Green in her last illness.

"9, Brunswick Square [September, 1875].

"Yes, I can understand what thou art passing through, my dearly loved niece—described in thy letter received this morning. I was very much wishing to hear, though there was little to expect but the report thou hast given of still increasing weakness and sinking. How hard for thee to witness, with thy devoted love to the dear sufferer. I know so well the dreariness of the prospect, the shrinking from the future, the pain of the present, even though merciful support is granted. And yet I want to say even in these circumstances, 'Be careful for nothing.' There is no need. The peace of God can keep our hearts—we cannot keep them—as in everything by prayer and supplication we make known our requests. Among the miracles which He who redeemed us yet works for His people, one of the greatest, I have often thought, is that change and over-ruling of our natural will and feelings, which is just as much out of our own power to effect as it is out of the power of another. But as we give them over unto Him, He can and does work in us to will as well as to do according to His good pleasure. And then the sting of sorrow is taken away, the blank and void are filled up by the light and blessedness of His presence, and at times He does enable us to go on our way rejoicing. We feel that we are but of one family on earth and in heaven. 'Part of the host have crossed the flood and part are crossing now!' I must not stay to write much, but I want thee, dearest Kate, to trust and not be afraid. He is able to keep thee in peace and He will, I cannot doubt, show thee that His own hand is ordering all as regards thy future."

To the same.

"14th of Third Month, 1876.

"We do indeed seem greatly in need of reinforcements here, and oh when I think of such an one as *I* coming to the front in a sense in our meeting, I need not tell thee what feelings are excited. Oh that it may truly be not *I*, but through Him whose strength is made perfect in weakness, that ever a word may be said or a service offered. I know and am comforted in feeling that I have thy sympathy and best desires. May the mercy and condescending love whereby I have been led on, be an encouragement to thee to make better use than I have done of the prime of thy days and the vigour of thy powers in whatever way opens before thee. I do see the need and the privilege of it more and more."

To the same, soon after P. Green's death.

"9, Brunswick Square,

"24th of Fourth Month, 1877.

"My Dear Kate,—I have received two welcome notes from thee since I wrote. I have been wishing to reply, for truly my thoughts and sympathies have been much with thee. I do not think, as thou sayst, that anyone can understand such feelings as thine without a somewhat similar experience. I know well how time only seems to increase the sense of loss, the indescribable longing after the dear voice, the presence, the sympathy to which we were accustomed. And then too I know how apt the mind is to turn back on the past with thoughts of what one might have done better, what it would have been better not to have done, and all this comes with a keen pang. My own experience has been that in the very things

which other people have thought one has done particularly well, in which one is congratulated perhaps on having satisfaction in the retrospect—in those very things I have been so conscious of fault and shortcoming that nothing but humiliation remains. A little remark of thine in the letter to Anne which thou gave her leave to show me made me think that some such feelings may come over thee. And I want to ask thee to turn away from them. I believe they are a temptation bringing one into needless distress.

'The past is still in His keeping,
The future His love will clear.'

"It is often a comfort to me to feel that His mercy is over all the past, and that this shall not separate from His love and the blessed enjoyment of it any more than things present or things to come. Not that these remarks are applicable to thy present circumstances, my beloved niece. Thou hast indeed great cause for thankfulness for the help graciously given thee to discharge thy duties with true devotedness and affection, and if any thought of a regretful kind arises, try to look at it in a way which she would do now, which she would wish thee to do, all trouble being swallowed up in the eternal weight of glory. . . . There are many other subjects I should like to speak of, but must leave them until another time. Such a pressure of things, often of a trying character, forbids one to dwell wholly on one subject, and yet how much there is of gracious help and mercy through all. "Thy very loving Aunt,

"A. Hunt."

This letter closes the correspondence with Catherine Hunt, who afterwards returned to her home in Bristol.

CHAPTER IV.

"Quiet from God . . .

. . . . . .

It giveth not a spell to humankind
To lay all suffering powerless at its feet,
But keeps within the temple of the mind
A place of refuge and a mercy seat.
A spiritual ark, bearing the peace of God
Above the waters dark, and o'er the desert sod."

S. F. Williams.

IN one of her letters to Hannah Southall, Ann Hunt said: "Thy dear letter was as pouring in oil (we won't say wine) into wounds which will ache and pain, much as I desire to disregard them, and know that in the right time healing will be given for all. It does not seem to me that in this world there will be much of rest, except that which outward unrest cannot break; very thankful I am for any measure of that graciously given."

She did, indeed, need the experience of that inward rest in an especial manner during the next few years. It almost dismayed her friends to witness the anxieties that gathered round her just when they had imagined that she had entered on a period of peace and freedom from pressing cares. The niece A., concerning whom she had been less anxious for a

time, became again an object of much solicitude ; her health was shattered and her domestic happiness precarious. She began to spend much time with her aunt, and when not actually with her there was continual intercourse or correspondence, so that the experiences and the varying moods of a person of impulsive temperament were continually brought before her, often to the disquieting of her loving heart. From the year 1878, after a crisis in these troublous affairs which brought for the first time the look of old age to Ann Hunt's calm and peaceful face, A. became wholly dependent on her "Mother Aunt," as she called her, not indeed for means of subsistence but for every arrangement for her health and comfort. She did all she could for her with almost more than maternal love and patience, bore with her waywardness, watched over her wherever she might be, and always made the best of her, both to herself and others ; indeed, it must be admitted that her affections sometimes blinded her judgment in this case. All could unite, however, in pity for the forlorn condition of her charge, which was not the result of any flagrant error on her part.

In addition to all this, and before she knew how heavy would be the claim, Ann Hunt had offered home and shelter to an aged relative, Charles Hayward, whose wife, a beloved cousin of her's, had died unexpectedly in the winter of 1876. The one arrangement complicated the other, so that the home in Brunswick Square had its full share of cares

and anxieties at this time. Yet nothing hindered the response to other demands, or the diligent fulfilment of other duties. There was still the capacity to "meet the glad with joyful smile," as well as to "wipe the weeping eyes." The following words are to be found in a letter belonging to one of the most painful years :

"What a mercy that the capacity for love and joy does not wear or grind out of the heart, no not even though one is 'brayed as in a mortar among wheat with a pestle,' which seems rather like my experience."

She thus alludes in a pocket-book diary to her cousin Maria Hayward's death :

"I cannot realise it yet, but I have lost the nearest to a sister this world contained. But if 'nearer to Thee' it brings me, all is well for me, as for her."

And on the following day : "A day of feeling the shadow which death casts over the living as it is long since I have done."

At the close of the year 1876, in the same book, she wrote :

"Year just passing away has had its trials. The cloud under which it began deeply shaded the earlier half—mitigated but not removed. Dearest Maria's unlooked-for death a great blow, and health failed under continual trial. . . . My own course more defined. Recorded as a minister, great kindness and sympathy shown, and often have I been helped to my thankful wonder ; yet great cause for humiliation. . . . And now, in the last hour of 1876, how does

my soul crave the continued, the yet more abundant blessing for the ensuing year, craves it for me and mine. . . . For us who venture to speak in Thy name be pleased to give more love for Christ, and communion with Him, and fellowship one with another, more life and power and liberty, that if it please Thee there may be an awakening out of sleep, and a putting on of strength in Thy name, to the blessing of our little church, and exaltation of Thy glorious name through and with the blessed Saviour. And so I close the book, yet be Thou still near me, most gracious Lord."

To J. S. Fry.

"7th Month 7th, 1877.

"I often long that we may not be waiting for special occasions, as the holding of general meetings or the visit of some gifted stranger, in the hope that our gracious Lord would then manifest His presence and power among us in a way which we do not look for at other times. Surely we have had evidence that He has not taken His Holy Spirit from us, and is not the longing and the prayer which He puts into the hearts of some of us a token that He designs yet more abundant blessing? Sometimes I wish that we had more opportunity for united supplication that so it may be, but I trust there is indeed a union of many spirits, though perhaps unknown to each other, in such requests."

At this time of her life the little entries in her diary were made at the end of the weeks only: they sum up as it were the past seven days, and show the

spirit in which she had learned to do and to bear. Thus :

"Many engagements and troubles, but some deep peace and precious access in prayer. My soul longs for a fuller measure and more entire devotion."

"A sense of blessed union almost unknown before. My soul longs for its increase, even for fulness of blessing."

"Surely the prayer of last week was answered ; I have been kept in peace, more deep and solid than perhaps ever known by me. Yet, blessed Lord, give more."

"A very gracious instance of guidance—Oh that it may bring forth the fruit of faith. Blessed Lord, a week is before me full of need of Thee. Grant accordingly if it be Thy will."

"A week of watching, of tears kept back, of sadness, of prayer, but of longing for more sense that the Comforter is with me. Yet of gracious help."

In 1878 the Southalls were travelling on the Continent, and Ann Hunt wrote thus to Hannah S. :

"9, Brunswick Square, 25th 4th month, 1878.

"I am beginning a second letter to thee, as I conclude from your packet, which reached me yesterday, that one I posted on the 22nd for Milan will not find thee, as you left that place that day. . . . I had the consoling thought, while writing, how small the loss would be if the uncertainties of travel led it astray. So now it is a great comfort and interest to be able to acknowledge yours, so full of

loving remembrance, and of such reports of your seeings and doings as seem to bring me to you in a sense. Thy own faithful thought of me so soon, in that gay absorbing Paris was very sweet to me, and I can understand what a relief it would be to thee to be spared the evidences of such degradation as our miserable 'Leek Lane' furnishes.* How many times have I thought of thee since I heard thee speak of it, as I have traversed that unlovely passage to our Meeting-house. Yes, you must indeed have witnessed dazzling spectacles, and sights of sadness too, on that festival day of the Roman Catholic Church. It always feels such a comfort to know that the one gracious, all-seeing Father of spirits looks right through all the mummery, and all the mistakes, and sees the sincerity of even the benighted worshipper, or the half-enlightened priest. Truly their zeal and devotedness might often rebuke us, with our clearer light, and our unthankful lethargy. Seeing all these conditions of religious and social life must have an enlarging and enlightening effect on one's mind, which perhaps I, who have only travelled down one flight of stairs since dear E. left, can hardly realise. I got into the drawing-room yesterday, after being just three weeks in my room, or almost entirely so. It seems long, considering the degree of illness, but I do not think anyone could wonder at my not getting *on*, who knew what I have had to get *through* and to get *over*. These continue, but I will not dwell on the heart soreness they create, for I have been wonderfully helped thus far through one of the most tangled

* The old Meeting-house in Bristol called "The Friars" is situated in a part of the city which has much gone down. The lane alluded to (now improved), was the nearest way from Brunswick Square to meeting.

and 'worrying' portions of my life. Perhaps I gave the impression that things were more elucidated than they are. . . . The weather is beautiful here, and I have a sense of spring and returning brightness even through all in-door-ness and cares. What a blessing there is in the returning seasons. We trust them in the outward creation, and do they come less surely, or the Sun of Righteousness arise less certainly on the soul? Surely no. I can feel the 'healing on His wings' even through the twilight, and look for brighter beams. . . .

"Farewell, in true and near affection am I thy own

"Ann Hunt."

The troubles alluded to in this letter did not lessen as the months rolled on; in November they culminated, that is the worst became known, and the loving aunt found that poor A. was an object of commiseration to a deeper extent than she was aware of before. Keen anxieties followed, and much perplexity as to what to do for the best. Through all Ann Hunt was unwearied in her patience, and ready to accept any help and alleviations as they came; it was touching to observe her gratitude to her own friends when they extended kindness to her charge. There was improvement after a time, and a lightening of the burden, and though cares never ceased until after A.'s death, yet Ann Hunt was able gradually to resume her former life, and to enter into its many interests.

The following was addressed to Hannah Southall on the death of a friend :

"9, Brunswick Square, 11th 12th month, 1879.

"I was grieved to think that I had been remiss, dearest partner, in sharing thy great loss and sorrow from the death of thy much loved friend, so worthily the object of the large affection and value which she received,—and truly I know what it is to have a blank made, where tender feeling and associations, to find the object of them all no longer there. I hope I was not unmindful of it, dearest H. ; but perhaps I felt too much as if the parting had been gone through before, when continued life was known to be as it were only measured by suffering. Still I know that it is then, when all present anxiety or ruffled feelings are at an end, that the mind looks back on the past as a whole, and the foreground of the picture does not detain the view or bias the feelings as it may have been doing. My own experience of life has been so sad,—there seems so much more danger of being separated from the love of God by life rather than by death, that perhaps the feeling has its effect almost unconsciously, when I think of those who sorrow, when with the morning comes everlasting consolation and good hope through grace. But it is indeed a sad void and a sore loss which that dear family and many with them, are called to pass through and suffer, and they are old enough to feel this most keenly and abidingly. . . . Thank thee for letting me know about your Monthly Meeting and reception of members. . . . I have taken the little part I am able to take in Society matters lately without interruption, and am thankful not to have been laid

by. . . . But I keep under cover a good deal in this cold and foggy weather. Dear A. has a great advantage in that respect in being in pure country air. She writes comfortably from——. . . . There seemed nothing else to be done, but I could not help anxious thoughts. These have been mercifully calmed however, and I only desire that preservation for the present and right guidance for the future may be mercifully granted."

To the same.

"14th of First Month, 1880.

"It was good to have thy letter, for truly, though letters may be crowded out in the warfare of daily life, I do not the less but the more value the loving and understanding sympathy of the few to whom my heart turns as friends faithful and true given me by God. And among these there is a peculiar place held by thee, who hast borne with me the burden and heat of many a trying day. So I did and do rejoice in the sense of help hitherto wherewith we are both, I trust, enabled to meet this fresh year. We will not say of the shadowed one that is gone, 'Let the dead past bury its dead.' The past never is dead in my experience. It is always fraught with power to influence the present, and so we will give it over into His hands who has mercifully led us through, to be laid up with them according to His goodness and compassion, and press forward towards the mark for the prize according to our high calling. I cannot say that it has been a very easy time with me lately, but this is not to be expected and there have been merciful mitigations."

To Elizabeth Southall.

"28th of Fifth Month, 1880.

"I was much interested by thy remarks on Mary Carpenter's life. Quite the same impression was given me by the extracts from some of the journals, etc., which were published at the time of her death, but I have not seen the book. The father's Unitarianism was of the same stamp. It was difficult to see where the difference was which the name implies. One does feel so thankful that the Allseeing Eye does not class us as we class one another, but looks through all disguises right through to the heart."

To Hannah Southall.

"24th of Fourth Month, 1880.

"How can I have written all this without alluding to the gladsome tidings of this morning over which the country has rejoiced. What a wonderful thing it is to see the power of a nation's will concentrated as it were upon one man, and forcing him to the front in spite of court influence or the manœuvres of the man who was at the helm. How thankful we all ought to be that once more Christian motives will be avowed, and whatever mistakes may be made there will at least be the endeavour to rule with justice and mercy. Once more those of us who may read the newspapers will be able to do it without shame and sorrow for our country. But what a weight falls upon Gladstone in his advanced years. Surely he will need a strength beyond his own, and surely it will be given him."

To the same.

"11th of Eleventh Month, 1880.

(In allusion to a departed friend.)

"She seems to have closed a life of great usefulness and devotedness by a short illness—suffering, but with the testimony of happiness throughout, and her husband and children and loving sister must rejoice in the midst of sorrow. And so must those who have watched the departure of dear Mary Waterhouse. A heavenly spirit gone to its home. I do not know how to grieve much over such privileged ones, —I who know so much of the deep sorrows of life, and of death coming in a less favoured form. But there is mercy over all."

To the same correspondent in the month of December she speaks of the praise which often filled her heart in feeling something like present deliverance, and "the opportunity of attending to daily engagements without a load upon my heart," and then goes on to tell about one of those engagements, a meeting of young Friends in which she was able to take part. And at the close of the year she wrote in her pocket-book :

"The year began under dark clouds. My precious Lord has brought me through and given light at eventide. Here I would afresh consecrate all that is indeed His, that His will may be done. For Thy name's sake lead me and guide me, O Lord, even continually and to the end."

To J. S. Fry.

"5th of First Month, 1881.

"My Dear Friend,

"It was not a little striking to me to receive thy note written last evening. I was then engaged for some hours in connection with a very trying affair, and in the early morning had been feeling strongly the need of asking the blessing of that peace which our gracious Lord alone can give. Thy desires for me in reference to this very need, and the word of encouragement and sympathy, came to me with true cheer, and I trust have helped me once more to thank God and take courage. I can indeed bear my testimony to His faithfulness. 'I will not fail thee nor forsake thee' is a promise which thou and I, dear friend, have tested and found true for us. I felt it a great privilege this morning to lay aside personal feeling, and to join in the prayer which went up for all the oppressed and enslaved by sin in its fearful power."

To Elizabeth Southall.

"27th of First Month, 1881.

"It is a very long time since I wrote to thee, but over all this ice and snow have my thoughts gone to thee and to dear H. with even special warmth. How good it is that with the thermometer even below zero (not that it has been so low here) there is no freezing of love, and that this is true also when the mental and spiritual register is low likewise. . . . How thankfully I have felt the contrast to former years in the rest and comparative freedom from anxiety permitted, I can hardly say. Morning by morning I do

indeed recognise the new mercies and long to be more trustful and stronger in love and faith, should ever such trials come again ; meanwhile doing any little service for which opportunity is given. I am trying too, in a slow and small way, to set my house in order, by the arranging and destroying of letters, papers, etc. But this has to be endured, like a series of surgical operations, as it can be borne. One hardly dares to look back into those depths again from which time after time the Lord graciously delivered.

"I have just read F. R. Havergal's Life—what a different experience ! Yet she with every advantage had her wilderness travel, though it was comparatively short, and Beulah seemed on the other side."

To Hannah Southall.

"1st of Third Month, 1881.

"It was a cheer to get thy nice long letter telling me so many things of interest and bringing us together again as it were. Not that I feel separated during these intervals when life jostles those who are near in spirit, but apart in outward experience. It often feels to me as a proof that hereafter there is a communion in store for those who have been fitted for it here, and yet the opportunity comes so scantily, perhaps is almost wholly denied. However, I trust it is not so with us even here. But life's scenes shift so often that there need be pretty frequent intercourse if we are to keep abreast of each other's circumstances, and so I will not put off a response to thine in which thou kindly thought of me as engaged in 'pastoral work.' I have been good for very little in work of

any kind lately, and my small ability is mostly absorbed by the family claims that come nearest to hand and cannot be left to another."

To Elizabeth Southall (undated, probably 1881).

"There is great excitement here, as elsewhere, about 'The Protection of Young Girls.' A meeting for men is to be held in the Colston Hall this evening, at which, Mayor, High Sheriff, Bishops, and M.P.'s, etc., are to unite in demanding better measures, and on Second-day a similar meeting for women is to be addressed by Miss Ellice Hopkins and others. The Chamber of Horrors unveiled by the *Pall Mall* is telling its tale. I wonder what you have seen of it. The details are too dreadful. Yet surely what some have to endure others ought not to feel too dreadful to hear of, with the view of finding a remedy. The only comfort one can extract is from seeing how many good earnest people of all classes and sorts are banded together for that purpose. And one condones the mistakes of the Salvation Army in the strength of the testimony borne by the Editor of the *Pall Mall* and Mrs. Butler as to the value of their great and uniform devotion to this good service. I am going to send a copy of *The War Cry* with fuller reports of meetings than other papers give. . . . Meanwhile our walls are placarded in large letters announcing a lecture by Mrs. Besant on 'The Morality of the Bible!' We can judge what the tendency of that will be. The opposing forces are strong. How one longs to help ever so little on the Lord's side."

To Elizabeth Southall (no date).

"I do feel very much that there is a great deal going on, and in the midst of dreadful doings and

revelations that make one feel uncertain where the lowest depth may be, it seems to me that there is a wave of fresh spiritual earnestness going over the nations, and that it can be recognised among us as a community. The fresh missionary movement may be one outcome, but I feel it more in what I can but think is a more general upspringing of life in individual cases under different circumstances, which it is one of the greatest interests in my life to be permitted to recognise or to hear of from others. How greatly one longs to be enabled even in ever so small a measure to help forward this work. Surely it must be a part of the joy of Heaven to do this where His servants shall serve Him."

In the year 1881, Ann Hunt attended the Yearly Meeting. She did so several times about this period of her life, but having had on this occasion the privilege of accompanying her, I am able to speak more definitely of her interest in it, and of the impression she made on others. I was almost surprised that this was as deep as it seemed, as it appeared to me that so little of her, so to speak, came out in these meetings. Yet I remember the remark of one Friend that she was to her mind "the Mother of the Yearly Meeting."

To Hannah Southall.

"29th 6th Month, 1881.

"We have had Priscilla H. Peckover here for a week or two on a social visit to her cousin, but a good deal of service has been combined with this. . . . The visit has stirred up a good deal of thought on the Peace subject, and led to a series of

meetings for discussion, in which those not fully satisfied were encouraged to state their doubts. I was at one of these when John Thirnbeck Grace presided ably, and much interesting and profitable conversation took place. The opposing view resolved itself into this, that war was *wrong* but *necessary*. So if that is a tenable position we must change our ground entirely, and say nothing to the poor man who steals his neighbour's goods because he is starving, or other such cases of necessity."

To Matilda Sturge.

"26th 9th Month, 1881.

"This is the day of the President's funeral. Such a uniting of millions in one deep feeling of unselfish sorrow was perhaps never known. I have been wishing that some gifted person would write worthy lines setting forth the contrast between the results of this death and these sufferings, binding together nations in brotherly sympathy, as they vie with each other in offices and words of kindness—and I was going to say, the harvest of hate and revenge which follows the exploits of the warrior who 'lays down his life for his country.'"

To J. S. Fry.

"19th 12th Month, 1881.

"In thy kind call last evening our conversation turned chiefly on causes of solicitude or discouragement. This was not the prevalent feeling of my mind. I feel sure it was not of thine. As my eye afterwards fell on the text, 'The Lord doth build up Jerusalem,' and the precious words that follow, it came like a fresh assurance that He will take care of

His own cause. May we as a Society never forget that while the Lord alone can build up His Church, or gather the outcasts, yet that He uses His servants to do the blessed work. As one whom the dear Saviour has owned in this service I would, my dear friend, hold up thy hands by prayer and any outward help permitted, rather than throw a shade of discouragement across thy path."

To Hannah Southall.

"5th 3rd Month, 1882.

"The past I hold warmly in remembrance, the present, dear Hannah, finds thee able to enjoy, and to do what thy hand finds to do with that sense of support and power given which is the privilege of our Father's confiding children. I was greatly interested by thy report of the visit of M. A. Southall and thyself to the little company at Almeley, and feel how great a blessing must attend such labours. The future is rich in promise in that way. May thy hands be made strong by the hands of the Mighty. Accept all love and heartfelt best wishes now and always from thy own friend and partner,

A. H.

To the same.

"6th 3rd Month, 1882.

"I wonder if A. would mention a little meeting held at this house,* when, in carrying out a suggestion approved by the Meeting on Ministry and Oversight, a number of Friends (Women) were invited who have families still under their parental care. . . . We numbered twenty-five to tea, and

* Similar to one mentioned some years before.

had afterwards an interesting occasion in the drawing room, partly of a devotional character, but principally occupied by interchange of feeling and results of experience, in which several took part very helpfully. The expressions of satisfaction and hope of profit received were very encouraging, and M. Sturge and I, who (spinsters though we are) had the principal management, assisted by C. R. Charleton, were I think very thankful as a collateral advantage that it was an occasion for bringing together with a common object the extremes of our social grades ; and it was a comfort to see how thoroughly this could be done with apparently equal satisfaction to those in the most and the least exalted position.

"I have just had the interest of reading 'Caroline Fox.' It far exceeded my expectations, and in addition to its intrinsic interest it was like re-peopling the scene with those long since departed, or if still here, veiled from my sight. Those people and doings—how much I heard of them at the time—heard too of consequences and feelings not told there. And how striking the acknowledgment that in *her* life, so privileged, so bright with outward possession and intellectual superiority, the teaching had been mostly through sorrow. Many things one might say about it and might learn from it. It is better to try to do the latter, and take the consolation and the teaching it is calculated to give as regards those who have been nurtured in a different atmosphere from ours, but who are children of the same Father in heaven.

"I will not enter now into personal matters. We do not expect the continuance of unruffled sailing or untangled threads. But if the sunlight and the peace be but given day by day we may well be thankful.

Dearest partner, I desire these blessings for thee as for myself, and am thy truly loving

"A. HUNT."

To the same.

"12th of Fifth Month, 1882.

"How melancholy a sequel to those terrible Dublin events* and the united feeling of detestation and sympathy inspired, was given in the House last night; all bitterness and opposition let loose again. Where will it all end? Surely if it were not for the knowledge that 'The Lord reigneth,' He sitteth upon the floods even of turmoil and wickedness, one might almost despair!"

To Matilda Sturge.

"Leominster, 5th of Eighth Month, 1882.

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—I am glad ——'s note induced thee to send me a word, for it was very congenial to hear, and I have been wishing to tell thee of our arrival here and that thus far we are going on comfortably. . . . How continually one feels the need of that *rest* which outward turmoil cannot disturb—especially does it seem essential for some of us who are more open to wounds from this pain-producing world than those of more stolid temperament or less deep feeling. It is our discipline, my dear friend, and I do believe a blessing is wrapped up in it if we can but get below the surface with its roughness and its stings. I think I never felt so sure of this nor so desirous to encourage others to hold fast their confidence, for there *is* great recompense of reward."

* The murders of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke in Phœnix Park.

CHAPTER V.

"All was ended now, the hope, and the fear, and the sorrow;

. . . . . .

All the dull, deep pain, and constant anguish of patience!
And as she pressed once more the lifeless head to her bosom,
Meekly she bowed her own, and murmured, 'Father, I thank Thee.'"

Longfellow.

To Hannah Southall.

"29th of Third Month, 1883.

"AS there is soon likely to be more space, as miles reckon, between us, I will not delay a few lines lest they be swallowed up in the transit, and I want to send such love and good wishes as a note can take expression of in the prospect of your journey. We shall follow you as we can with affectionate thoughts and hopes for good and blessing every way, and we will trust that by some channel or other we may hear of your progress and well doing. It seems to me a tax that ought not to be levied on travelling friends to expect descriptions of scenery and the like. I am sure the avocations must be too absorbing, and the weariness too great for such letters to be other than a tax except in rare instances. If you are kind enough to write let it be only a report of yourselves and any special personal interest. . . . Dear E.

would, I hope, get a packet from me yesterday containing J. M. Wilson's * Lectures, and a note from me. The course of lectures is still going on by different speakers, under the title of 'Why I believe the Bible.' There is one reported briefly in this morning's *Press*. . . . On referring I find the expression I wished to quote was used by Dean Plumptre, whose sermon on opening a Church here yesterday is reported in the same paper. He speaks of 'a kind of wave of doubt and denial and unbelief passing over the minds of men in this and other countries.' The great argument on the other side is assuredly the Christian *life*. The key-note of the address is: 'Is life worth living if this life be all?' The subject rather runs away with me, but I did not intend to go into abstract themes."

To Elizabeth Southall.

"12th of Fourth Month, 1883.

"I noticed thy remarks as to the unguarded and exaggerated way in which Scripture truth is sometime stated even by good and wise people, and can but grieve over the thought that in this way, as well as most notably by the inconsistencies of their lives, professing Christians have much to answer for in respect to the outward world."

To the same (1883).

(In reference to an engaged couple.)

"I had a very nice visit from the dear young people. My heart goes out to them more and more, and I earnestly hope that the union in prospect may

* Then Head Master of Clifton College, now Archdeacon of Manchester.

be just the thing wanted to strengthen all that is good and to correct anything that will not tend to happiness. . . . We must not expect freedom from ups and downs, but yet I think a plain path is before them now. When one can look back upon a married life from its beginning to its end, and see in addition, something of the consequences involved after the end has come, it does, if possible, deepen one's sense of the importance of these linkings of lives which are often entered into in such a short-sighted and superficial way."

The year 1883 brought a change to Ann Hunt's life and circumstances, the death of her niece A. occurring late in the summer of that year. Other family bereavements,—the deaths of her brother Henry and his wife had occurred during the time that she had been living alone, and in connection with these as well as in many other family events, her feelings and sometimes her active assistance had been called into play. But the death of A. was the removal of her most pressing and most personal care. It set her, as she herself said, more at liberty for service, and was attended by circumstances which enabled her to enter upon it with a thankful heart. A. had not of late been a person devoid of religious feeling. From time to time her aunt had been hopeful about her in this respect, and again and again was made anxious and disappointed. That there was some desire to do right, notwithstanding all appearances to the contrary, is the conviction of a friend of her aunt's to whom A. once appealed for

counsel. That she should have asked her advice at all at this time was only to be explained by a desire to be strengthened in what she herself knew to be the right course; and this course, it may be added, she was enabled to take.

A. had been living for some time in a family at G., and thither her aunt was summoned in the month of July,—she being little fit, as to physical strength, for the trials that awaited her. A sad time followed. A. was very ill, and a difficult patient in all respects—aware of her condition but shrinking from the thought of death, and showing little sensibility on religious subjects. But about a fortnight after Ann Hunt went to her, a great change occurred. A. had, what she designated, "a message from Heaven,"—her heart seemed to open to the free love of Christ to sinners; she joyfully embraced the pardon offered, and became, as was reverently believed, a new creature in Christ Jesus. Many tokens of the change were thankfully marked by her aunt, who regarded it as "a miracle of grace," and believed that through all the vicissitudes of nearly a month of suffering the anchor held firm; so that when on the 4th of September the end came, she was left, shaken indeed by her weeks of watching, and feeling the parting from one whom through all, she had loved most tenderly, but inexpressibly thankful for such an answer to the prayers of many years.

Believing that it might be useful to others, though not without hesitation, "lest any might be encouraged

in wrong-doing or thoughtlessness by the account of this death-bed experience," Ann Hunt thought it well to publish a little book about it, without giving names, under the title, "He Giveth the Victory."

It must not be supposed that her own cares did, except indeed for a few pressing weeks, prevent her from sympathising with the lives and trials of others. Perhaps they only added to her power of entering into their feelings. In writing to her niece Rebecca, married some years before to William Zaytoon, and residing near Beyrout, in Syria, she says :

"28th 6th Month, 1883.

"Oh, how continually have we to fall back on the cheer left us by Him who took our nature upon Him, and so knows its needs and infirmities, and from the experience which He condescended to pass through, knows how to succour them that are tempted in any way. . . . Truly, again and again, we feel that

'God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform.'

And He does perform them, though the footsteps in the sea cannot be recognised, nor can we see His face as He rides upon the storm. And the storm is sometimes very bewildering for awhile. . . . One thing I want especially to say—Do not look back, that is not with any self blame or regrettings for anything that was done at the time with the desire to do right, and in the belief that it was so. There are few things, perhaps, that occasion more bitterness and sadness of feeling than this. We are apt to forget that though we acted in blindness as to the result, He who is the disposer of all knew the end from the

beginning, and could with the same ease have made things turn out differently, or averted the consequences we regret. Perhaps, if we did not see darkly, we might have a view of some good end to be answered, or of some worse trouble that would have followed, had a different course been taken than the one which we are lamenting."

To Hannah Southall she wrote thus, "19th 12th Month, 1883," at the conclusion of a letter full of other topics :

"Yes, the season does bring my dearly-loved child very vividly to mind. She would have been coming now in a day or two with heart and hands full of love and love's offerings. But I can truly say, '*It is well.*' And not only in a sorrowful way am I reminded of her. There was an instance the other day. She had several times had periodicals, etc., bound at a shop not very far off, where there is a circulating library attached. I had been there with her once or twice, and saw the master, a man past middle age, very civil but nothing particular—I should not have known him again. In dear A.'s illness she told me she thought some trifle was owing to this man, and said she had a good many books which I should not want. There was no harm in them she thought, and perhaps this man would take the lot. (One or two she named that I had better destroy.) So I went to ask him to call, and paid the 1s. 6d. which he said was owing. He looked over the books, and offered what he thought them worth. He had heard of dear A.'s death, and naturally asked if she had been long ill. I told him a little about it, and when I spoke of her having been in a happy state of mind, he listened with so much

interest that I said more than I otherwise should. He went away carrying rather a heavy packet of books, though I offered to send them, and when he had occasion to come back, I said I thought he must be tired. 'No,' he answered, 'the glorious news you told me put fresh life into me.' I thought it was a strong expression, but said nothing, and he went away. This was several weeks ago, and I heard nothing of him until the other day, when I had a note, saying that he was bringing back some binding he had done, and that if I had remembered anything more I could tell him of the Lord's great goodness to Mrs. —— he should be very much interested, intimating that he had a hope himself, but no assurance. Accordingly he came, apologising for the liberty of writing ; but he said what I had told him had been like a spring of fresh life and hope, that he had been thinking of it so very much, it seemed as if it was intended to come to *him.* And then ensued a conversation that might have done for an inquiry room—tears and all. He was a man of few words, I should think not making any religious profession, but his mind seemed like the thirsty ground, prepared for any drops of refreshment. I was greatly struck with what may seem a little incident, but truly as A. often said, 'The Lord's ways are not as our ways ; oh, how different ;' and that her experience should be thus made helpful to a person about as unlikely as anyone I could have thought of, does make me very thankful."

This incident reminds me of another, different indeed, but showing in the same way how Ann Hunt could embrace opportunities, and was ready for every

good work. She told me, and I would I could repeat it in her own words, about a man who was employed in taking care of the green in the centre of Brunswick Square, to see that the grass and trees were uninjured. This man had occasionally come to her and she had had a little talk with him—not much it would appear—on religious subjects. After a considerable time he called one day to tell her, with all apparent sincerity, that what she had said had taken hold of him, and that she had been the means of a happy change in his heart and life. She related this with a touching humility, saying, "I who have done so very little—to think that this should have happened to me."

The following was written about the same time as a postscript to a letter to Hannah Southall. One of Ann Hunt's nephews had recently lost his wife, who died after an operation from which much benefit had been expected.

"I have yielded to another half-sheet to say that T. has given me as a remembrance of his wife the text book given her by A., which she used to use, with an affectionate inscription and the text, 'The Lord bless thee and keep thee!' As it had A's own marks in it, I rather begrudged the book to anyone else, little thinking how and in what way it was coming back to me. There is an added interest in it now, for dear L. took it with her to London, and when T. went to see her before the operation he told me that almost the first thing she said was what comforting texts she had found for the day, and

showed them to him : 'I am with thee to deliver thee,' and 'Be strong and of a good courage, fear not.' She wrote the date 'November 14th, 1883' against these texts, and there it stands. Truly the promises are fulfilled to her, though not in the way she expected."

The experience gone through at the death-bed of A. left a deep mark on her aunt's mind. She had always been patient and loving to those who had erred, but henceforth her heart was fuller of hope and trust. She wrote thus in her diary at the beginning of 1884 :

"A year new in its circumstances and feelings. Do not the words 'Sorrowful yet always rejoicing' describe my feelings. The sore pang ever ready to distress as the wounding things of life give their harsh touch, this is taken away. The tender clinging love is gone too. But anxiety is changed into blessed remembrances, fear into abounding thankfulness, and in a sense I feel it is written, 'Free to serve.' May it be so, body, soul and spirit, during the short remainder of life here, and then, oh, to serve Him and to see His face who is worthy, ten thousand times worthy of all prayer and blessing."

CHAPTER VI.

"Through constant watching, wise
To meet the glad with joyful smile
And to wipe the weeping eyes,
And a heart at leisure from itself
To soothe and sympathise."

A. L. Waring.

To Hannah Southall.

"16th of First Month, 1884.

"I DO not mean this as a reply to thine, for this is very different from the letter I meant to write, but I know you will feel especial interest in what is so interesting us. . . . I wonder if any intelligence has reached you of the solemn event which broke up our Quarterly Meeting yesterday without the transaction of any business, but amidst deep sympathy and earnest prayers. Our dear Friend Thomas Pease had not been well, but an attack of influenza seemed to be passing off and he was taking part as usual in different meetings. There had, however, been much anxiety about his son ——, and this prevented dear S. A. Pease from being present. At the M. and O. Meeting on Second-day evening T. Pease seemed as usual and spoke earnestly on the present tendencies of religious thought—the difficulty of upholding those truths which were the result of conviction, well-considered investigation and experience, without being laid open to the charge of narrowness and

bigotry, than which nothing can be more foreign to the mind and feelings. He spoke of the danger of seeing these important principles ooze away as it were, one thing after another, and how great was the need of wisdom in this direction. . . . The next morning he was heard in prayer, very fervent and earnest and evidently under much feeling. There were several addresses, but more silence than usual, and we broke up to reassemble for a Joint Conference before dinner. A report was read from a committee having the care of the smaller Meetings and —— and —— spoke in a rousing way of our failures in that direction and our lack of doing as our predecessors in the faith had done. Soon after, our dear Friend (T. P.) rose to speak. In reference to this subject he pointed out the different state of religious feeling now, and drew attention to the recurrence of revivals of the kind which George Fox, Wesley and others were endowed with gifts to lead. He wished we should not discourage ourselves by looking at our small Meetings, but remember the prevalence of our principles in Southern Russia, Constantinople, etc., and in parts of our own country, on the borders of Wales and elsewhere. He spoke, too, warmly of the comfort he had lately had in visiting in our little Meetings individuals of a high standard of Christian life, humble minded, yet exercising a wide influence for good, and full of acts of kindness and love. Then he began to say something of the dangers which threaten from the linking services of religion with the fasts and vigils and saints' days, which come down from a dark age, yet still remain in force. I noticed an agitation of voice, but was unaware of anything alarming till an effort as to repeat a word—and a pause—and in a moment the hurried

uprising of the Friends on the other side as they went to his support and laid down the helpless form inside the gallery rails. . . . The consternation was great. We were asked to withdraw, but there was no intimation to relieve alarm and none such could be given. For awhile, however, the anxious groups outside cherished the hope that he was 'coming round,' and it was not till J. S. Fry made his appearance, pale and answering inquiries by saying that Dr.—— thought he had passed away, that the fact was realised. It was made evident by seeing the dear sad party on their way to a carriage to take the tidings to his home. . . . We were asked to assemble in the dining hall, and there after awhile the announcement was made and the Clerk read a minute which he had prepared recording the awful event and adjourning all business till the spring. A meeting was then held for prayer, and surely a company has seldom been overspread by a more solemn and united feeling."

To Matilda Sturge.

"21st of Third Month, 1884.

"I am afraid I must give up the Bible Class, which is a disappointment, as I doubt not there will be much of interest in considering the subject to be brought forward.* There is often an advantage in the clear explanation of a term, and I hoped to hear defined what 'Assurance' is. This might help to answer another question: What prevents our having it? When our kind friend invited us to meet next time at B. House, I doubt whether any of us went away con-

* The subject on this occasion was "The Assurance of Faith."

sidering whether we felt sure she intended us to go. We may have had many doubts of getting there, but the doubt if she would receive us if we came never occurred probably to any mind. We all had 'assurance' on that point. Turning to the great invitation of all, we should scarcely like to confess more unwillingness to trust. The promises are too abundant, too definite, on too high authority to allow us to doubt their meaning. So far then as regards the momentous question we have assurance. But assurance of *what?* The invitation to our friend's house did not take us there; the glad tidings do not bring us great joy unless we receive them. And as in the familiar illustration that I have used there are hindrances which keep some of us away, so there must be something in or connected with ourselves which prevents any of us from consciously accepting the great salvation as it is freely offered without money and without price. The causes are manifold. It will be very interesting and profitable to have light thrown upon some of these, for there are inward fears as well as outward objects that are the more formidable by reason of the darkness. Perhaps some one may be helped to remember that there is no presumption in the most undoubting trust in another who is able and willing to give all and to do all that our deepest need can require. The Apostle wrote to those that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may *know* that ye have eternal life (1 John v. 13). So that we have a warrant to expect a share in this highest form of assurance. May a blessing be given as you consider it together, dear friends.

"Affectionately, A. H."

To Hannah Southall.

"10th of Fourth Month, 1884.

"I do not wonder that with all the pressure upon thee and the causes of anxiety in various ways, to say nothing of the household overturnings, thou didst not feel able to look round on the world very cheerily. How many times hast thou helped to hold up my hands when they hung down, and were ready to fail from very weakness, and I would it were in my power to give thine a little strengthening touch, and breathe a life-giving thought into thy heart. The 'Be of good cheer' seems sometimes to come rather as an echo of something true but far away, than as the word for to-day and this very hour. But what a comfort that the Great Speaker knows it all, 'not alone as God all knowing,' 'but as man our mortal weakness He has proved.' And so He is able to succour even body and mind."

To Rebecca Zaÿloun.

"16th of Seventh Month, 1884.

"I do believe that these mental trials and privations are intended as a means of discipline to assist us in learning what we earnestly desire to be taught, but shrink from the necessary lessons. Perhaps the remedy for such pain is to be sought in such entire trust and loving confidence in Him who is dealing with us, that the sore anxiety, the keen sting will be taken out of our trials, and a measure even of liberty known to sympathise with the sorrows of others, who perhaps have not yet been taught the secret of rest unto the soul. But I know that the conflict is strong, and it is not often that the victory is known. I thought of thee this morning while listening to a very

interesting address from R. B. Rutter on 'Keep Thou my feet,' going on to expand the subject in connection with the race to be run with patience, 'Looking unto Jesus.'"

To Phyllis Rowe.

"Ashley Down, Bristol,
"9th of Eighth Month, 1884.

"My Dear Phyllis,

"I know thou wilt like to think of me here during the remarkably hot weather of the present season, as I do to know that thy lot is cast among refreshing breezes and restful country pursuits. Thy reports of your places of tarriance are exceedingly attractive. It is good of thee to wish me to share them, but mine seems to be an inland way of life at present. This is a nice change, and a sweet reposeful scene offers to the eye; while dear C. R. Charleton's unfailing kindness and desire to do good and give pleasure are a solace and cheer. . . . A kind invitation for dear Rebecca* will allow of my having her company here part of the time. . . . The parting with her will leave a blank, for she has an exceptionally loving nature, and more power of sympathy than some, and we must of course regard it as a last parting for this world. One learns to look on these things differently however as years go on. I think there is more power to estimate the relative importance of events after seeing the beginning and the end of so many. In early life we only see the beginning—no end is realised, and we cannot compare attempts with the results, as time enables us to do. . . . How

* Who was visiting her friends in England at this time.

vividly stands out in memory this very day and hour last year, when to my wondering thankfulness I was permitted the evidence of a miracle of grace and redeeming love, which only feels more marvellous and more precious as the eternal world is neared. I do not say or write much about these things—they are too sacred, but I know thy loving sympathy, thy power of understanding the life lived below the surface of passing things."

To M. C.

"14th of Eighth Month, 1884.

"I want to say how much I am interested in those extracts of Dr. Carpenter. I am so ignorant that I do not know who he was—not Mary Carpenter's father, I suppose ?—though the sentiments and feelings are like those of that good man, of whose brotherhood in Christ I could not doubt, Unitarian minister as he was. It is to me such a rich delight to feel that those who call themselves by such different names, who think themselves so far asunder, are really one in heart and experience and hope, and will join in the same song and service through a blessed eternity. Truly may we say, 'Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity,' and own Him as their Redeemer and their King. . . . My sympathy responded warmly, my dear friend, to thy remark on the delay in the answering of prayer. Yes, indeed, Why ? Many a sad heart has asked it, and perhaps heard the answer given of old, 'What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.' We talk a great deal about faith. When it comes to be needed we often find that we have but little. Somehow things feel quite different from what we

read of them in books or when there was nothing particular to fear. I will copy a passage from 'The Fourth Watch' on 'Jesus went unto them walking on the sea': 'We who are waiting for Christ, are we ready to have Him come what way He pleases? Can we give Him a welcome? Welcome, however it may be? Ah! we are so slow to put a blank into the Lord's hand! Afraid of His ways and of His thoughts, so different from our thoughts, not knowing and believing the love which He hath towards us. We like to draw up the paper ourselves, even to the date, presenting it then only for His signature, and we hardly know what to do with an answer more strictly of His sending, but are disturbed and affrighted and ready to question whether it be the Lord. However much the disciples had longed for their Master, now when He was really coming they were afraid.' I was thinking yesterday (just about the time, perhaps, that thou wast writing thy letter), what a sore trial of faith it must have been to the sisters of Lazarus—when they knew that Jesus could heal him, that if He were there their brother would not die—and they sent that touching message to tell Him. No doubt they thought He would come directly. How they must have looked out and waited, and how sad to see their brother die, as if Jesus did not care to come or send any answer. And yet we know now what a marvellously greater manifestation of love and power was in store for them and for us all in all ages through that waiting and delay. I do not want to fill paper with old truisms, thou knowest it all well, dear, and yet I feel so sure that that sore heart hunger and pain can only be allayed by *trust*, trust in our Father's love and wisdom. We

cannot find out, we never shall find out in this world why things are permitted. Perhaps some time in the life of that other world we shall see what has been done for us, and for our dear ones, and what we and they have been spared through the very dispensations which have been so inscrutable."

To Elizabeth Southall.

"Brunswick Square, 9th of Tenth month, 1884.

"I should like to begin a letter to thee to-night lest it should be crowded out and so delayed to my disappointment at least, for I do wish to use the address thou gave me. It was nice to think of you with dear friends at S., and now I hope thou art finding comfort in being with another, long known and loved. What different sets of feelings and characters of friendship our hearts can find room for, and give the right place to each. Does not this capacity of ours in an infinitely small way betoken our likeness to Him who made man in His own image, and who takes in the stupendously great and the microscopically small, all our individual concerns and unending requirements under His fatherly and redeeming care?"

In the same letter she mentions for the first time the failure of sight, and describes her visit to an oculist on this account. It happened that I was with her on this occasion, and I remember her saying to me afterwards, in reference to the unfavourable opinion that had been given, that she believed she should have sufficient eyesight for all that was allotted to her to do. It had been discovered that

she was suffering from cataract, but no operation was spoken of at this time.

To Rebecca Zaytoun.

"16th of Tenth Month, 1884.

"It is a very common temptation of him who was a liar from the beginning to represent that any failure in Christian conduct on the part of professors is a proof that their religion is false. It seems to me that it would be just as reasonable to shut the shutters close in a room, and then looking in and finding it dark there, to say: 'O, there is no sun, there is no light anywhere!' Perhaps these terrible trials (for such they are) are permitted to make us feel that our faith must not stand in the goodness of men any more than in their wisdom, but in the power of God, in His unspeakable love in sending His Son to die for us, to save us from our sins, and give us eternal life and blessedness with Himself. Truly to whom shall we go? Thou, the Saviour of our souls hast the words and the gift of eternal life. Yea, let God be true, though every man be a liar; and happily there are no small number who can set to their seals that God *is* true."

To the same.

"30th of Tenth Month, 1884.

"I often think how expressive those Scripture images are: 'Under the shadow of His wings.' 'He will cover thee with His feathers, under His wings shalt thou trust,' and many more. These promises of shelter and refuge show that there is something to

require it, that we are not to look for all fair weather and sunshine—this seems to me to be a mistake in the teaching of our faith-healing friends—that because the Lord Jesus 'bare our sicknesses and carried our sorrows,' we are justified in claiming exemption from them—a view not given in Scripture nor confirmed by experience."

To the same.

"11th of Twelfth Month, 1884.

"I was much struck yesterday in reading that beautiful Psalm, prophetic of the Messiah with the verse: 'He shall deliver the needy when he crieth, the poor also, and him that hath no helper.' How often have I felt as the poor, and as him that hath no helper, and it is at such times that the ever-present compassionate and all-powerful Saviour is felt to be indeed precious. . . . Things are wisely ordered for ends which we see not at the time, and so it seems to me that every case has its own rule, and every one his or her own place if it can but be attained unto. I have thought many and many a time that I must have missed mine, the trials of life have been so intense, and the results so small. But I am more inclined now to leave all, the past as well as the present and the future with Him who knows the end from the beginning, who work His will deep in unfathomable mines to our poor shallow comprehension. There is great rest in thinking of this, in feeling assured that His infinite love is over us, no more to be turned away by our involuntary fears and shrinkings, than is that of a mother by the fretting of a restless child. What a precious promise: 'As one whom his mother comforteth so will I comfort you.'"

To Hannah Southall.

[Early in 1885.]

"And now I have been reading over again thy dear letter written on the last day of 1884. Very precious it is in every way, especially in its loving desires and sweet thoughts for me. Yes, I do feel very thankful for the degree of calm permitted, the 'sparing mercies,' as I have known such called. Things are difficult sometimes now, and [there are] many causes of anxiety, and yet how different from the experiences, the extremities of former years. I do feel reverently thankful, sometimes with wonder, at the power of enjoyment which yet for a little season remains, and for the absence of soul and body weariness, after all that has been gone through. The trying season of Christmas and the New Year passed more cheerily than the last, without that ache of gone-ness; though I have realised more than before how old I really am. Not that I feel it in any particular way, but it seems natural now to fill the part of an old woman—to take some one's arm to go up and down stairs, and to be dependent on help in walking out in the evening. Of course this is not from age exactly, but it is an infirmity that must be expected to increase till the end comes."

To Rebecca Zaytoun.

"22nd of First Month, 1885.

"How remarkably it is the case that our earthly but heavenward journey is taken in the midst of so many trials and difficulties. I come in contact with such in my own experience, and sharing in that of others to a large extent, and must believe that it is in this way that much of our spiritual education—the strengthening of our faith and the enlargement of our understandings is carried on."

CHAPTER VII.

"In a service which Thy will appoints,
There are no bonds for me,
For my inmost heart is taught the truth
That makes Thy children free:
And a life of self-renouncing love
Is a life of liberty."

A. L. Waring.

IN the summer of 1885, Ann Hunt laid before her Monthly Meeting a proposal to visit the families of Friends in Bristol and its neighbourhood, and to her great comfort and help, her friend Joseph Storrs Fry desired to accompany her in this service. The proposition was cordially received and both Friends were set free to accomplish it. Ann Hunt was fitted for such work by nature and experience; her surroundings were now calm and peaceful, and though age and past troubles had told upon her strength, she had full confidence that ability would be given her to do that which she felt called to perform. Her companion writes thus on the subject, after mentioning that the visits included many of the attenders not in membership in our meetings and were afterwards extended to the members of other Monthly Meetings in the compass of the Quarterly Meeting:

"For one in advanced life and in rather feeble health the service was somewhat arduous but she was enabled to perform it to the comfort and spiritual help of her friends. It was striking to observe with what interest and discrimination she entered into sympathy with persons in very varied circumstances, and how appropriately the message was delivered with delicacy and tact. Her habitual diffidence and humility were remarkably combined with Christian courage and faithfulness in speaking the word in season as occasion called for it. To those in sickness or other affliction she was peculiarly fitted to hand the consolations of the Gospel, and to speak of the loving-kindness of the Lord from her own experience."

What she felt herself in reference to this engagement may be best seen in her letters of about this date.

To John Gayner.

"24th of Seventh Month, 1885.

"The subject spoken of has taken so strong a hold of my mind that I have ventured to mention it to ———, proposing to ask the sanction of Friends at the next Monthly Meeting for such service as we were speaking of. . . . It seems a great, an almost fearful thing to have done, for though old in years I am young in such experiences,—but it is nothing with the Lord to help whether with many or with those who have no power, and I have abundant cause to trust his loving-kindness and His faithfulness."

To Hannah Southall.

"9th of Eighth Month, 1885.

"I do not like to let the quiet hour this afternoon pass over without telling thee how sweet and precious was thy letter. It is a great cheer to me that amid the occupations of your life of abounding interests, thou and dearest Bessie have been able to go with me even into these deeps,—such they are as respects feeling, though not of the character of overwhelming sorrow, through which also you have gone with me. Let it be so still, even until that river has to be passed where alone the One can walk with us, can sustain and take over in safety. I want you to know that the adjourned Monthly Meeting is fixed for Third-day at 7 p.m. Very few indeed know the part I am expecting to take in it, and thou canst well suppose I am unable to realise it myself. With all my life-long and long-life experiences, this one is so new. At times it seems like going down out of the ship like Peter to walk on the water. Yet I cannot be thankful enough for the condescension whereby I have not been left to doubt, and I can believe that however feebly any service of mine may be rendered, there is a purpose of blessing in it which will not be wholly lost."

To John Gayner.

"19th of Eighth Month, 1885.

"We paid two visits at ——. . . . I felt it a merciful condescension that on this entrance in the work there was a precious sense that the Lord was graciously with us, and I may venture to say the same in the first call I made by myself. . . . In a

rather striking way, wholly unlooked for, the visit seemed seasonable. Then, yesterday we went to Brislington, and had a time with the dear aged Friend there,* so bright in mind and spirit. . . . I can thankfully say the work is made easier to me than I expected, while the privilege of the companionship is even unexpectedly great."

To Elizabeth Southall.

"21st of Eighth Month, 1885.

"DEAREST COUSIN AND FRIEND,

"I know thou hast sometimes thought of me in this 'walking on the water' that I am doing day by day. How I feel that but for the help of Him who I trust called me to do it, I must sink. But in great mercy I have not felt it to be so, rather on the contrary a little measure of life and strength given from time to time both to soul and body."

To Hannah Southall.

"28th of Eighth Month, 1885.

"I often feel as if we were in danger of getting out of our depth when we try to explain the dealings of Him whose thoughts are above our thoughts. There is much in those lines of Dora Greenwell's, who was herself so firm a believer in the expiatory sacrifice :

'I am not skilled to understand
What God hath willed, what God hath planned;
I only know at His right hand
Stands One who is my Saviour.

* Elizabeth Thomas, widow of George Thomas. She lived eight years after this, and died at the age of 98.

I take God at His word and deed—
Christ died to save me, so I read ;
And in my heart I find the need
Of Him to be my Saviour.

Yes, living, dying, let me bring
My strength, my solace from this spring,
That He who lives to be my King
Once died to be my Saviour.' "

To J. S. Fry.

"Clevedon, 24th of Eleventh Month, 1885.

"The unity in essentials with diversity in modes is so high a privilege of the One Church. I felt it last evening when we attended a meeting of the London Missionary Society, and heard very interesting statements by missionaries from Pekin and a province of India. One felt afresh how every true work for Christ is in one service, and longed that any portion ever so small that might be allotted should be done heartily as unto Him."

To Elizabeth Southall.

"5th of Twelfth Month, 1885.

"Then I want to tell thee, my own dearly-loved friend, that I have not broken down, nor during the last month was prevented paying a single visit by any hindrance of my own. Indeed, I think I bear the work better now than I did at the beginning, taking as I do every possible care—going on at an average rate of about ten visits per week. We shall scarcely finish this year, if there should be no interruption, but it would make the residue small. It will, indeed, be a great mercy if I am permitted to accomplish what seemed so marvellously great to propose, but I

do continually feel as if help was given for the day and the hour, and I am deeply thankful for this confirmation of faith and fresh experience of the tender mercy of the Lord. Of course, the variety of those we meet is very great, the well-to-do in luxurious houses and the poor living on Friends' charity in their small abodes. We have one member living in an almshouse—we have not been there yet. I think the only expression of endearment I have heard from a stranger was from an almost blind old man of this class, 'Good-bye, *Dear*,' which I treasured up with much encouragement. Then we have the university student, and the man who cannot read, some aged above 90, and many little children, with contrasts in every other department. There are a good many who are not members, only connected with such, who like to join us, and no one is excluded."

It may seem to some perhaps, who remember the "Family Visits" of former days, when they often formed part of the service of Friends from a distance, and were accomplished even in large meetings in a short time, that Ann Hunt felt almost too deeply the solemnity and importance of the work. But her deep humility and lowly estimate of her gifts, combined with the fact that her previous acquaintance with her fellow-members caused her to be aware of the difficulties of the undertaking, made it inevitable that she should feel as she did about it, nor can we doubt that the spirit in which she carried on the work conduced to the blessing likely to follow it. She wrote thus at the end of the year :

"Now in its last hour I look back upon 1885. It has been an eventful year to me. May I thankfully record it as the happiest of my life. Part of it spent in much feebleness . . . but strength gradually given again. Then the engagement of visiting the families here with my dear friend J. S. F., a marvellous thing indeed, brought about, I reverently trust, in the blessed Lord's own way, for what was I to think of such a thing? And then the help from time to time, and the fellowship a privilege. The work not finished, but prayer for a blessing on it goes up continually. . . . I would offer at this hour *myself* a living sacrifice, rendering unto Thee that which is Thine own. Accept and bless the offering, O Lord, in Thy condescending mercy. The gradual failing of sight may be called the year's chief trial, yet I have hardly felt it so. As yet it has been easy to say, 'Thy will be done.' Should I live another year perhaps this record will be lost to me, for the dimness increases. Even so enable me to say, gracious Father, if it be Thy blessed will."

To Joseph Storrs Fry.

"13th of Second Month, 1886.

"As we stand on the threshold of another week, which if it comes to *us* will be one of rather special interest and importance, it is a comfort to believe that united prayer goes up for the guidance and the blessing so essential at every step of the way. We do believe that our blessed Lord is willing to give abundantly, 'For of His fulness have we all received and grace for grace.' Wherefore let us comfort one another and our own hearts by these thoughts."

Her insight into character is occasionally shown by touches in her letters—naturally not often, as she was very careful in what she said of others. In a letter to E. Southall, written about this time, she remarks of a young friend :

"I was delighted to see ——, she seemed to me so much grown in desirable points since she was here before—warmer, brighter, and generally elucidated—that the little intercourse has left a very favourable impression."

To Rebecca Zaytoun.

"18th of Fifth Month, 1886.

"I am more and more convinced how needful it is, if we are to have any true peace and spiritual blessing, if we are to grow in grace, that we should know our foundation laid for ourselves on Jesus Christ, the Rock of our salvation, that we should know whom we believe, and that He is able to keep us, and all that we commend unto Him. It is the want of this to the extent we need it, that really makes us so liable to be unsettled and beclouded by the misdoings and mistakes of others. These are very trying, but we must look beyond them. Our gracious Lord said those things before He suffered 'that in Me ye might have peace,' even when He told His disciples that in the world they should have tribulation, they were to be of good cheer for He had overcome the world. And truly He means it now as much as He did then. We shall never get the peace or keep it by escaping. It will, and does, and must come, we know it and feel it, all of us. But I do long that those who in truth name the name of Christ as their Lord and Lawgiver,

should live so close to Him, so abide in Him, as not to be greatly moved by the wrongs and distresses of earth."

In the summer of this year it was decided that Ann Hunt's and J. S. Fry's visits to families should be extended beyond the limits of Bristol and Frenchay Monthly Meeting. In reference to this prospect she said in a letter addressed to myself :

"If this may be done, as to my share in it with something of fear and trembling, it is not on account of what may be involved of trouble or effort, or even risk to health, but lest having attempted to walk upon the water, faith may fail. But these are unworthy misgivings, if the service or any portion of it be indeed called for and accepted. Thou wilt think of us, my much loved friend, and perhaps dear C. will also."

To Hannah Southall.

"9, Brunswick Square,

"29th of Seventh Month, 1886.

"My own Beloved Partner,

"It is rather long since I wrote. Circumstances have caused it, not I am sure it is needless to say, any lessening of loving thought or sense of communion. It seems as if I had almost paid you a visit myself, so vividly have scenes been photographed by dear Matilda. She came to me early on Third-day afternoon, and stayed till the Monthly Meeting Conference at seven o'clock, so that we had a nice time together, and I heard a good deal of your doings. . . . It is a great pleasure to me to have this fresh bond of

interest established between those who are on each side though in different ways so closely linked with me. Now she has put on harness again. . . . It seems, dear love, as if everything one does almost opens some fresh sphere of interest and responsibility. I have felt this almost solemnly even this morning, not that anything fresh has occurred, but the scroll keeps unrolling, and as I consider how soon the earthly portion of it must end for me, the interest thickens and the longing grows more earnest that whatever my hand finds to do may be done in the strength given. . . . Oh the diversity of human experience! During part of the time it [a Children's Meeting] was going on, I was reading in *Night and Day* the story of wretched waifs of similar age, of whom Dr. Barnardo tells the heart-rending tale. And then again, *what* a picture of heathendom does C. W. Pumphrey draw in her paper in *The Friends' Quarterly Examiner* just come out. I did not get through it. Surely it is permitted us in mercy that we do not, cannot realise these things—we could not endure the agony. One longs that such portion only may be brought closely home as we may be enabled in any way to relieve. It seems to me that this is the only way in which such thoughts can be healthfully borne —not excluding but giving a large place to the helpfulness of prayer."

To Rebecca Zaytoun.

"5th of Eighth Month, 1886.

"I noticed thy remark about the effect of so much 'secular work.' It always seems to me as if it were a part or a department of religious work. It was my

lot during so large a portion of my life to be closely occupied by common-place duties, to be so almost entirely shut off from what is called Christian work, and very much from religious privileges, that if my spiritual life and growth had depended on these, it could scarcely have survived at all, even in the feeble way of which I am conscious. This experience has helped me to realise that it is not the work we have to do, but the spirit in which we live on which the blessing depends. . . . We cannot believe that so much of the time of Christian people would be necessarily employed about these things connected with our earthly life, if their souls were unavoidably losers thereby. On the contrary I believe the true religious work and the true spiritual growth are often found in connection with outward affairs when so done as unto the Lord. . . . It is as we abide in Christ that we are safe and blest, not whether we are doing this or that. A different kind of service is sometimes given as in my case, but I feel it is the same now that I have been permitted to share in more direct religious engagements."

To the same.

"30th of Ninth Month, 1886.

"Truly it is a troublous world, making one feel very strongly the need of a refuge as well as strength. Do not think that there is any special trouble affecting me. In great mercy it is not so. I can truly say that I can look back to no period of my life in which I was so free from trouble, and had so much of real enjoyment as during the last year—thankfully I say it, and with desire to devote every faculty still granted

me to the service of my precious Saviour and Lord. But this personal exemption only makes me more able to feel for others who are struggling with the waves, and drinking the bitter cups from which *I* have drunk so deeply. Going about as J. S. Fry and I do from one family to another, in different lines of life and circumstances, we find so much trial, very diverse in kind, and yet proving the insufficiency of earthly things to give rest and peace; and yet the one remedy is all-sufficient. Where there is the love of Christ and true submission of heart and life to Him and His will, there is calm and peace, even though surroundings are those of tribulation. And where this love and devotedness do not bear sway there is unrest, and often discord and disappointment, even when outward things are comparatively easy."

To Matilda Sturge.

"14th of Twelfth Month, 1886.

"I am afraid we must not look for help from thee [at the Bible Class]. After thou went from home, as we had no 'subject,' and there was no one hardly to consult with, I ventured to suggest 'Christian Work, What is it?' my idea being that something might be made of it, not by depreciating that which is generally called so, but by enlarging the area and pointing to the root of it. Though we minimize the functions of leadership, I suppose something of the kind is desirable, and I feel especially disqualified for it now by the failure of sight. I was almost surprised at the extent of this between the time of our previous meetings and the last. However, I have found hitherto such very kind help in every department of this trial that I am hoping it will be so now. . . . What

thou said about people who do not know anything *worse* than the sorrow of bereavement means a great deal. And yet, until the heart's inner circle is left empty, one hardly knows what that is. How continually we feel the need of a refuge as well as strength, and the time of trouble in which we want the very present Help comes in so many forms and so frequently. . . . Now I am almost afraid I have tired thee. Will only add the dear love, which will be no burden I hope, for thee and dear C.

"From thy ever affectionate friend,

"A. HUNT."

To J. S. Fry.

"27th of Twelfth Month, 1886.

"Before thy present came I was longing to say a word to thee, as is the custom of the season, not indeed exactly in the customary form, but in the true desire that the peace which passeth all understanding may rest upon this closing year, and that the joy of the Lord may be richly granted, to be strength in that which is soon to come. . . . How wide and how heartfelt is the consolation of knowing that our 'God shall supply all your need,' according to the glorious measure spoken of in the text. And surely, if He suffers us at times to feel that need very deeply, it is that we may experience how all sufficient is the supply."

Ann Hunt and Joseph Storrs Fry proceeded in their visits to other Meetings, and with the exception of one or two very small ones at some distance, which J. S. Fry visited alone, were enabled to accomplish that which they had in view. Ann Hunt was much

interested in the new friendships which were formed in this way, and there was something very appropriate in this extension of her sympathies beyond the circle of Friends to which she had always belonged. She bore up well, though it became evident that strength and eyesight would scarcely have sufficed for more than was actually accomplished.

The following letter contains the first allusion to her possible need of companionship in her home :

To Elizabeth Southall.

"16th of Fourth Month, 1887.

"I am expecting Phyllis on Second-day to stay the night, and then we can talk of future plans. . . . More than one friend has suggested her staying with me as desirable, and I had before thought of asking her to spend the winter months here, should there be no unforeseen change. Of course, I do not know that she would like it, but her being set at liberty* and my growing dependence seem rather like guiding circumstances. M. Sturge was very earnest about it the other evening, and I have thought about it a good deal. I should like it as a trial—that is, to try how it would suit—for I have got into ways, not perhaps what is called selfish, but of by-myselfness, which perhaps might a little interfere. She is, however, not only a most kind and efficient, but most easy and unselfish person, and I should find her a great comfort in many ways. So I trust it may all be ordered for the good of both, if I continue to need a companion."

* By the death of Eliza Barclay, of Darlington, with whom she had resided for some years.

The result of this suggestion was that Phyllis Rowe accepted the invitation for the winter months, and although she did not, for various reasons, prefer to make Ann Hunt's house her home, she continued to pay her long visits up to the time of her own unlooked-for death. She came to Brunswick Square for the first of these visits in November, 1887. Previously to this, some young Friends, knowing of her failing sight, had offered to come one by one at stated times to read to her. She gladly acceded to the proposal, rejoicing as much in the opportunity of intercourse with those in whom she was interested as in the advantage to herself, and the plan continued in operation until the commencement of her last illness. On their side her young visitors delighted in her society ; the book was often laid aside and the time occupied by earnest talk, personal or discussive.

She could still write clearly and legibly at this time.

To Hannah Southall.

" Brunswick Square,

" 15th of Tenth Month, 1887.

" While dear Cousin E. is gone out to do some shopping, it feels very congenial to me to write a few lines to my partner beloved, and thought of with undying remembrance—not to die, I trust, even when the body dies, which now encases the living memory. . . . Dearest, I have heard of thee, of course, through Bessie, and, as far as permitted, have entered into present interests and difficulties. But still more does my heart turn to the subject on which thou

spoke in thy last and asked sympathy, which is truly rendered: I mean about the causes of concern arising in your Meeting. These matters come very closely home to those who are earnestly engaged in endeavouring to raise the standard, and to draw into true union those who uphold it. I do not know that there is anything more depressing, nor that tries the faith more, than the falling out of rank of those enlisted under the banner which the Lord gives to those who fear Him. There are so many influences that lead to this, sometimes not easy to recognise—I expect it is so among you. It is not felt exactly in the same way among us, and yet there is much that leads to close searching of heart. I desire to be shown wherein anything in ourselves or our ways of working, or the neglect of these, may be obstructing that measure of blessing which our Lord designs to give—He who is the Shepherd and Bishop of the souls, for whose salvation and growth in grace we long. One seems to come back again and again to the conviction that the true cause of all failure as to fruit-bearing is the want of close personal union with Christ—that blessed condition of which it is said that the living water shall be in him, and shall *flow out* of him. Whenever I begin at the faults and failures (which abound with us also), I always seem to come back to *this*; and the longing to realise it more myself and, if it might be permitted, to help others to realise it, seems to swallow up the thought of other remedies. And yet measures of this kind, as auxiliary, must be adopted, and such I have no doubt you are doing. I was very much interested in hearing about poor ——. I hope all patience and forbearance will be exercised, for perhaps we can scarcely estimate the strength of

the temptation which comes over such an one at times, and is utterly overpowering without Divine help. It may be that his fall may be made a blessing in awakening him more clearly to see his danger and where alone his safety lies."

To Hannah Southall.

"5th of Sixth Month, 1887.

"Thank thee very much for mentioning that nice book—but like many other things my reading is more in name than reality, for thou seest that though there are several readers there is but one hearer, who has besides other functions. Times do not always suit, and altogether we do not get through rapidly; there is often a good deal of talk, which I would by no means have eliminated. The passing literature which one used to look hastily down and extract the essence, has very much to be foregone;—though I do not cease to take interest in public affairs, and hope not to subside into that somewhat lamentable condition."

To Elizabeth Southall.

"18th of First Month, 1888.

"I have been thinking lately of the promise of leading the blind by a way which they know not, of making darkness light before them and crooked things straight, and the precious assurance 'these things will I do unto them and not forsake them.' Now that I cannot as formerly refer to Scripture passages and read a chapter or more at will, these priceless gems of promise seem to shine out with special brightness and are full of rich consolation. I have not felt lonely or dull during this week since coming home, but on Second-day I have arranged to go to C. R. Charleton's, and stay if all be well until Fifth-day."

To the same.

"17th of Second Month, 1888.

"I feel that I have owed thee a letter for a long time, not that the loss is thine, for I feel the privation of intercourse tells most on me,—and yet I feel too that this slowness of execution and narrowing up of opportunities belong, to the *discipline* I will not say, but to the preparatory treatment of advanced years, mercifully arranged by Him who promises to carry in old age as in tender years. 'I will carry and will deliver you.' I never understood the blessedness of this promise to hoar hairs until I was old myself—though as yet mercifully spared many of the infirmities and trials of this stage of life. Neither has the laying aside yet come, for seldom has life seemed busier, or [have there been] more claims on thought and action since I have had in a sense the disposal of my own time. Dear Phyllis is an excellent and most kind helper, or rather in many things efficient co-worker, as well as having schemes and kindnesses to carry out on her own account."

To J. S. Fry.

"18th of Fifth Month, 1888.

"There are, I truly feel, many mercies—and if the words suggested by Milton be true for me, the privation which we spoke of last night will be one of these,

> 'My vision hast Thou dimmed that I might see
> More of Thyself alone!'

"That this blessing which includes so much may be increasingly thine (though with undimmed vision) is my prayer very often."

CHAPTER VIII.

"He giveth rest more perfect, pure and true,
While we His burthen bear;
It springeth not from parted pain, but through
The accepted blessing there,
The lesson pondered o'er with thoughtful eyes,
The faith that sees in all a meaning wise."

Lucy Fletcher.

IN the spring of 1888 the question arose as to the desirability of an operation for cataract, which had previously been considered a thing not to be thought of for a person so advanced in years. Now, however, her friends told her of an oculist who thought little of this difficulty, who had been successful with aged patients and was willing to operate at a comparatively early stage of the disease. "I need not say," she remarks in a letter to Hannah Southall on the subject, "how pleasant it would be to look again on the lovely country and on the faces of dear friends as well as to have books and papers unsealed and to feel less of helplessness. Yet I could scarcely have believed how little of distress there has been in this, so mercifully are minds and circumstances adapted to each other."

It was decided to try the experiment, and accordingly in the month of July she went to Nottingham with her kind friend Hannah Southall, and had the operation performed on one eye, the one in which there was the more complete loss of sight. It was skilfully and successfully accomplished, but her health was shaken, and it was many weeks before any improvement in her sight became apparent. She went to Malvern for awhile to recruit her strength, but it was not till some time after her return home that good results began to appear, as good perhaps as her friends could reasonably anticipate. From this time until within about two years of her death she was able to read and write more easily and doubtless also to see more of the outward world and of the kind faces round her, though she never acquired any confidence in moving about outside her own house. But she soon resumed her place as a worker in various ways.

To Elizabeth Southall.

"29th of Eighth Month, 1888.

"I am thinking of thee, my own dearly beloved friend, in relation to thy birthday, which I believe is to-day. The dimness of vision which prevents my being quite sure, does not extend to the heart, nor does the uncertainty as to the place where thou art affect the nearness inwardly, which miles of land or leagues of ocean cannot render less vivid in its reality. May it be granted us while we are on this earth together to live in such sweet communion, and when death separates us I like to think that only ties of

this world will be dissolved, and that all love which comes from Him who is love will survive death and continue with a deeper and purified existence, may we not hope, in life eternal."

To Rebecca Zaytoun.

"20th of Twelfth Month, 1888.

"Here, though in a different way, the claims on anyone willing to attend to them are very strong. . . . They do not seem to grow less with advanced years, so that the precious promise of finding rest to the soul is equally appropriate. Yet it would be ungrateful and, as it were, bearing false witness to a most condescending Lord not to acknowledge His loving-kindness through all and the overruling of His gracious hand when earthly hopes and aids have failed and faith has been tried as by fire."

After giving an account of a temperance meeting held by the Bristol and Somerset Friends' Total Abstinence Association for the servants of Friends, she says to Hannah Southall :

"26th of Second Month, 1889.

"I had no intention of saying a word, but just threw in my mite at the end as the oldest member of the committee and the oldest abstainer in the room, having never virtually been anything else, and the audience were very responsive."

It should be noted here that her interest in the Temperance cause was very warm and invariably consistent. The Association above mentioned was established in 1877. She became a member of the Executive Committee, and only resigned when

advancing age compelled her to give up some of her engagements.

To Rebecca Zaytoun.

" 28th of Second Month, 1889.

" How many and wonderful are the ways in which our gracious Lord teaches and comforts and directs His children. I used to think, in days when I had to struggle as for spiritual existence, that some special sense of comfort or life was often permitted before some fresh trouble. I cannot think that we are intended to be so raised above natural feelings as not to suffer pain from loss and disappointment and other afflictions. If it were so where would be the chastening which is the portion of the Lord's children and the proof of His love? Yet it is said to be for the present grievous. He who took our nature knows what our nature must feel, and it seems to me that the power of His grace is shown when in the midst of natural pain and sorrow the heart remains true in its submission and loving trust in Him, and in His doing all things well. . . . As to bearing provocation I do believe the secret of this is in keeping close to Him, living near as in His presence, and then it is like being hidden in the secret of His tabernacle, under the shadow of His wings, where those provoking things very much lose their power—do not reach you as it were."

To J. S. Fry.

" Clevedon,

" 16th of Third Month, 1889.

" Fifth-day evening the usual week-day meeting was held, as it had been put off to allow of another engagement. And it was congenial to think of those

at 'The Friars' as occupied at the same time and in the same worship. I wondered if thou would be able to get there after the engagement of the morning, yet felt how little there is of separation in miles of railway or walls of buildings, or even of occupation of hands, where spirits are united. May this blessed fellowship be granted to us more and more, my dear friend, in our Lord and Saviour. And may He be abundantly felt to be continually present, supplying every need in the service which is in prospect abroad as well as at home."

To the same.

"19th of Sixth Month, 1889.

"It is, I think, profitable to have an opportunity of knowing the inner working of a different style of Quakerism from one's own, such as is in operation here. One sees, perhaps, both the strength and the weakness of it, and must desire to imitate it in the one, and to take warning by the other. I think it strikes one afresh how utterly vain and barren all efforts are, apart from the grace bestowed, and how liable we are to lapse into error, except there be the keeping on the armour of righteousness, preserving both on the right hand and the left."

To ———.

"2nd of Eighth Month, 1889.

"My beloved Friend,

"I should like if I can to reach thee with a few lines before thou hast left our dear friends at ——, that I may take the opportunity of sending them a warm message of love while acknowledging thy very welcome letter. It has been sweet to think of thee in such congenial association, and I would thankfully

rejoice in the feeling of refreshment that thou wast able to speak of. I also have felt it a fresh proof of the loving-kindness of our gracious Heavenly Father that He gives us help in this particular way, suited to both body and mind—and have felt an instance of it now given. It is of His grace that after seasons of deep trial, and sometimes of long continuance of it, there is ability to recognise and acknowledge the blessings granted, and to know indeed that He restoreth the soul, and does help our infirmities by the renewing of His grace."

To Elizabeth Southall."

"2nd of Twelfth Month, 1889.

"It was quite affecting to read thy report of the afflictions in [that] circle. I know thy deep loving sympathy would bring thee into much feeling with the bereaved and the depressed, and cannot doubt that thy presence must have been a real cheer. In how many different ways do the trials of life come, and yet in all there is the same need of the Divine healing and support, and of the solace of human sympathy, as I can largely bear witness, but the one availing Helper can always be told, can always be trusted with our sorrows and our perplexities, and what a boon is this to man, who is born to trouble. For myself I would rather just now speak of mercies, which often feel to me to be 'new every morning,' both in what we call the great and the smaller ones."

To Matilda Sturge.

As it appears, in acknowledgment of a card having the words. "My meditation of Him shall be sweet, I will be glad in the Lord."

"25th of Twelfth Month, 1889.

"I think I can say that this which I might take as thy desire for me, has been in rather unusual measure the experience granted to-day. Many years now have passed since I was alone on this day of general gathering together, and I have not been without kind and interesting visitors. Still many hours have been given for meditation, and many as are the Christmas Days that I have seen, never did the wonderful character and world-wide blessing of the message which the angels brought from Heaven itself, feel so marvellous and so inspiring with love and trust. So that the meditation has been indeed calculated to make glad in the Lord."

The year closes with the following memorandum :

"Brought once more to a closing year. What can I say of thankfulness for the Lord's goodness from its beginning until now? Health almost throughout, no severe trials, blessings unnumbered, the very great one of a new precious friendship. And spiritually, ever increasing sense of what it is to have such a Saviour. O Blessed Lord and Master, wilt thou take more full possession of my being, and glorify Thyself in and by me. Here would I dedicate all that remains of life to Thy service. Be Thou my Guide even unto death."

To Hannah Southall.

"6th of First Month, 1890.

"I want to thank thee lovingly, dearest H., for the letter which gave a welcome farewell to the Old Year (I don't mean that the departure was welcome, but thy letter was), and which helped me to look forward

to that on which we have now fairly entered, almost a week of it gone already. The entrance on the last decade of my life in all probability felt very solemn. And truly as thou sayst there is much around us to cause reflection and to make us feel our need of trust in Him who is strong while we are weak. . . . I have not read 'Looking Backward' yet. There seem to me other and more real ways of looking at the subject, and we—I and my readers—are rather deep in other books. I am reading myself, with intense interest, Paton's Life. I have got about half through the first volume, and am in the midst of his mission miseries and discouragements. People who believe in the goodness of human nature should ponder the case of those wretched savages, and those who are looking out for remedies for evil should study the cure which has been so efficacious there."

To a Friend on her birthday.

"6th of First Month, 1890.

"My much loved Friend,

"Though I hope we may meet to-morrow, I am thinking of the morning as it will dawn upon thee, as I trust in that deep peace which times and seasons cannot affect—and I long to add one to the many affectionate expressions which will reach thee on the entrance of another year of life. Many there are who will ask for a fresh blessing upon thee and thy house. And how comforting it is to feel, as I think I do rather afresh as I write, that no outward circumstances—not deep trial even, not sore bereavement—can interfere with or intercept this blessing which does indeed make rich. Surely the sympathy of our precious Saviour is round thee now. He who knows

all the pain and all the blank that attend life, and which His own healing power and His own presence can alone effectually reach. May this be a sweet and strengthening experience, dearest friend, during the coming year, shared as I know it must and will be by many—those who are nearest and those who are farther removed from thy daily life. It is one of the arrangements whereby the 'manifold grace' effects its designed purpose, that experience sometimes at heavy cost works hope, not only for the subjects of it but for those who witness its effect. . . . Hoping to meet to-morrow evening,

"I am thine most lovingly,

"A. Hunt."

During this year Ann Hunt, as a member of a Committee of the Meeting on Ministry and Oversight, took a very useful part in visits to Friends at their homes, which were being carried out under the direction of that Meeting. The engagement resembled the one in which she had been occupied in 1885, with the difference that several others shared the labour, and that the visits in which she took part were made with varied companionship. In allusion to this service she wrote to J. S. Fry :

"8th of First Month, 1890.

"Perhaps it is likely that as the time becomes necessarily so very short in which any service, however humble, can be rendered, that one should feel increasingly earnest in the desire to see and to do the little that may be permitted. The work that is going on in the earth is so great, the needs are so

vast, and the power of our Redeemer is so all-sufficient, that one wonders sometimes how it is that His children and servants do not get more hold of it, are not more strongly impressed than many of us are by the all-surpassing importance of this matter. These thoughts have made me feel lately almost more than ever the importance of doing even what may seem like a fragment of the great work with diligence and such wisdom as may be graciously given. In this way I have thought of these visits of the Committee which are in prospect, for the Lord can bless even the barley loaves or the widow's mite, and He can and does bless even abundantly the gifts which He has Himself bestowed for the witness to the world and the building up of His Church."

To the same.

"9th of First Month, 1890.

"Just now I am rather hastening to finish the first volume of J. G. Paton's Life. . . . It is a remarkable book. One seems to want a term to apply to it. 'Interesting' is all too weak. We have heard much of the awful degradation and cruelty of heathendom, and of the depravity of the *white* savages who resort to such lands, of traders, etc. Also of the marvellous changes wrought by the Gospel. But I think these realities are seldom so forcibly brought out as in this record, in which, however, as far as I have gone, the sad and the awful predominate. Still, such an instance as is afforded of Divine Grace, as sustaining under and through years of suffering and danger, unsupported by human sympathy is surely invaluable."

To Hannah Southall.

"Clevedon, 12th of Fourth Month, 1890.

"A card from me would I hope reach thee after thine was written, which would tell you of our proposed flitting to this place, where we have since been, amid much of wind and rain, and almost winter cold. Now there is a fine bright day, though strong wind and a shower occasionally, and I have been out in a pony chair. . . . There is much of interest awaiting our return, my visits on the Ministry and Oversight Committee above all in prospect. Oh how unequal one feels, yet there was a text which abides with me on our beginning day: 'In everything ye are enriched by Him.'"

To Matilda Sturge.

"27th of Seventh Month, 1890.

"Thy letter was truly welcome. I found it here on my return from a short visit to Taunton, and I do not leave for Farm (Leominster) until the 29th, so that I have the pleasure of reporting what little I can from the old place. It is *one* of our bonds of union that our interest in this Meeting is so strong. . . . Thou spoke of recollections of last year. This is a period unusually marked by my own recollections. . . . Two years ago I passed through the operation which mercifully restored, I might almost say, sight to the blind. And it is just seven years since I entered on that never-to-be-forgotten six weeks of nursing at Gloucester,—an experience which has never since been for long together absent from my thoughts. . . . I have done a little more visiting since we met. . . . Think of the difference in character of these three visits. They cannot be catalogued,—but

what an expanse of mental and spiritual experience one has a glimpse of. Surely if one did not go in the conviction of unfitness for anything but the humblest service, one would shrink from it altogether. I have not found reading 'Jonathan Merle'* at all incongruous. It is long since any book took such hold on me. . . . I have read more than half with my own eyes or *eye*. . . . It seems to me a very remarkable book. Is it not 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' translated into English life? *Our* slavery cannot be abolished even by a war, but the vivid picture of it given here cannot fail to stir many hearts to work for its amelioration, and truly there must be 'a good time coming,' and there must be more proof of what Christianity means, what it ought to do and can do. I almost wish that more place was given in the book to the evils of the drink customs, for whatever is done with the land there can be nothing but ruin unless this cause can be removed. I heard another fearful story of misery from this cause in our own line of life while I was at ——."

To J. S. Fry.

"Leominster,
"30th Seventh Month, 1890.

"I was privileged with a safe and easy journey here yesterday, and was kindly met at Hereford by Hannah Southall. Everything looks bright and beautiful in the pleasant country, and the flowers are abundant. I enjoy the change yet would not give up the dim old city with its deep interest for any of these

* "Jonathan Merle," by Elizabeth Boyd Bailey. Two subsequent books by the same author, "Zachary Brough's Venture" and "Forestwick" fulfil the desire expressed by Ann Hunt farther on.

charms. I thought of you this morning, as we were in our little Meeting, and you were I hope in larger, though not large numbers at the Friars."

To Phyllis Rowe.

"Brunswick Square,
"13th of Ninth Month, 1890.

"Yes, the world is poorer as we say by the loss of James Backhouse,—who has gone where doubtless he has a higher service,—how far this may be connected with earth we know not. Yet I think as one after another passes away one cannot resist the conviction that there *is* a united service carried on by the one family in heaven and on earth. *They* serve perfectly one cannot doubt, seeing His face. But to our finite view the service on earth seems to be much left to the dwellers here, and is also but very imperfectly performed. Still there are workers, good and true, and our little Society rejoices in a good many such in one field of service and another. John Gayner has put a letter in to-day's [paper] on the Opium subject, trying to awaken people's minds to their responsibility as to this awful conduct of ours as regards China. It is very pathetic to find the ruling men of that country deploring the ruin of their people by this terrible plague, yet not daring to try to check it lest they should be involved in another war. Sometimes one thinks almost with trembling on the query, 'Shall I not visit for these things?' saith the Lord: 'shall not My soul be avenged on such a nation as this'? Is it still as Cowper says, 'the salt preserves it'? Then there is our own dreadful drunkenness which they say is on the increase, spite of all efforts to check it."

Allusion was made by Ann Hunt, before entering on 1890, to "a new and precious friendship." She referred to Caroline E. Stephen, whom she met occasionally from this time, and with whom she kept up a correspondence which has not been preserved. C. E. Stephen wrote thus of her and of their friendship, after her death.

"No words of mine can say what was the blessing to me of our seven years intimacy. I think I never knew so motherly a soul, and the combination of most unusual mental vigour and openness to every variety of serious thought with profound and tender reverence, made her for troubled minds indeed a refuge and a counsellor of the rarest order. Then the raciness and sparkle of her talk always seemed the outcome of such quickness of sympathy as could, I suppose, have learned in no less severe school than that in which she was so long and deeply exercised. I can quite enter into the difficulty of conveying to an outer circle true impressions of a character which was the result of so much necessarily veiled experience, and whose natural sphere of action and influence was in the most intimate and deepest region of other lives. A brief indication of the key-notes of her life is all that would seem to me possible."

To this testimony may be added that of Anna Lætitia Waring:

"In fellowship with all who love and highly esteem Ann Hunt, I would gladly, if it were given me, add some worthy testimony to what she was as I knew her. But I would not take upon me, in recalling the great spiritual pleasure of intercourse with her,

made so rare by her cultivated natural gifts, to say more than what I know she would like me to say, that to be with her was in my experience to be very near the Son of God and of man, in the brightness of His revelation of the Father, His faithfulness to those who trust and wait upon Him, His goodness awaiting those who know it not. Her's was a character that must be felt. . . . I never had any written correspondence with her, but the meeting was always in one holy place, common to all who believe, but dearly loved and deeply dwelt in by her."

The words of such witnesses scarcely bear addition, yet it may be well to try a little further to indicate the key-notes of her character from the standpoint of a longer acquaintance, and to do it at this point, when Ann Hunt was in the midst of her Indian summer, enjoying a clearness of atmosphere and a radiance of light which she had not known in the spring-time of life. The sympathetic power for which she was so remarkable was, as may be seen from her letters, of no common kind. She seemed to see as with the eyes of others, but in a purer, clearer light. She held intercourse with "all sorts and conditions of men," some of whom held views on religious subjects entirely different from her own. She never yielded on any point that was regarded by her as important, but she seemed able to reach to the heart of things and to find a ground of union there. Once after talking with an intimate friend about a doctrine on which they differed, she said, "What is

the difference in the *attitude of soul* between thee and me?" Her friend was able to answer, "None."

As a Friend she was liberal, and ready to rejoice in good wherever and however it might appear. At one time she clung with a natural tenacity to the external distinctions and other restrictions which had marked the Society long after the time when she grew up, and she dreaded lest the changes which had begun should affect the reality or the devotedness of the spiritual life. But gradually, while making no alteration herself, she became reconciled to these things, learning to look beyond and beneath them, and to understand that change may be a necessary indication of life and growth. The point she would insist on with her young friends, in the wide field now open to them in pursuits and engagements, was that they should, in the exercise of their freedom, be always ready to choose and put first the highest good. She was one who knew how to reprove so as not to "break the head," and still more how to touch the springs of action and produce the right effect without reproof. A friend once wrote to her, that while conscious of powers which might be turned to more account, she also felt that their value was largely counterbalanced by an unhappily constituted temperament and disposition. Ann Hunt's reply is not preserved, but it is remembered that she said with emphasis that it *could not be* that the grace of God was insufficient in such a case. It is difficult to convey an impression of the charm of her society, of the

way in which she entered into the interests of others, different as some of them were from anything in her own experience, of the brightness of her manner and the earnestness of her talk, seasoned, as it often was, with touches of humour and playful smiles. She was the recipient of every kind of confidence, and her advice was sought continually in cases of difficulty or perplexity. She had besides a great love of children, and her interest in them was so tender and discriminating as to be delightful to those who brought them under her notice, scarcely expecting perhaps that she would have much attention to bestow. It happened in her own circle of relations that two young families were very much thrown on the care of aunts and uncles—she, the great aunt, had not the charge of these young people, but helped when she could, and was consulted as to every arrangement made for their good. But it need hardly be said that she entered into every event, joyful or sorrowful, in a large and scattered family with the keenest interest; what is less common, her feelings were similarly called forth for many others, who leaned on her judgment and reposed in her sympathy and love. As to the nature of her influence, one is reminded of the words of Elizabeth Barrett Browning in describing a friend:

> "She never found fault with you, never implied
> Your wrong by her right, and yet men at her side
> Grew nobler. . . ."

For the effect of it was penetrating, beyond the apparent value of her words. In return for her loving

kindness, affection was given her in "good measure" and "running over," so that lonely as she was in an outward sense, she was never in her latter days lonely in heart. Her friends vied with one another in helping her in any way possible; if need were in greater things, and always in smaller matters, such as calling on their way to take her to meeting, or supplying her with flowers from greenhouse or garden, or fresh from the country lanes or fields. And she always appreciated every little kindness or token of love.

It should be mentioned that she took especial interest in "Meetings for Church Affairs," especially the Meetings on Ministry and Oversight. She attended them as long as she was able to do so, and did her best to infuse into them something of the tone and spirit which ought to prevail on such occasions. In the winter of 1890-91 she took a leading part in a little series of meetings for Friends who had been lately received into membership. A few others united with her in this engagement; the gatherings were small and held at her house. They were conducted for the most part in a conversational manner, the special topic being the principles of the Society of Friends. One of the members of Bristol Meeting remarked lately that nothing had helped him so much as these little meetings. In a letter to Hannah Southall she thus alludes to them herself:

"Your district is great in Teas—and doubtless such institutions are a great assistance to the more

spiritual ones. That little meeting here, which I have told you of, has to do its best without such assistance, for I give neither bit nor drop to the attenders. Still those who come seem to feel an interest and I trust there may be some benefit received ; certainly *I* can acknowledge it."

Ann Hunt had no lack of taste for the pleasures of social intercourse ; she delighted to spend an evening or pay a longer visit at the houses of her friends, and she also kept up an interest in a variety of subjects, and was often to be seen at lectures or committee meetings when attendance must have required considerable effort on her part.

CHAPTER IX.

"How quiet shows the woodland-scene!
Each flower and tree, its duty done,
Reposing in decay serene,
Like weary men when age is won;
Such calm old age as conscience pure
And self-commanding hearts endure,
Waiting their summons to the sky,
Content to live, but not afraid to die."

Keble.

To Rebecca Zaytoun.

"10th of Second Month, 1891.

"IF I could, I should like to encourage thee to a simple, confiding trust in Him whose love is so immeasurably great, has been so marvellously proved by His life and death for us, becoming poor that we might be rich. Well, if so, will He not undertake for thee in spiritual as well as natural needs? When the temptation comes to feel unloving or irritated, cast thyself upon Him. Look away from the thought, from the object that causes the temptation, to Him and His dear love. I have found this the greatest help myself in besetments which have been exceedingly hard and painful and persistent in my own experience. Didst thou ever notice that in the text 'We love Him because He first loved us,' the Revised Version leaves out 'Him' and makes it read, 'We love because,' etc. At first I was sorry for the

change, but there is a rich meaning attached to it, signifying that Christ's love to us enables us to live in the very spirit of love to all those whom He has given Himself for. Then about the giving away one's possessions. I do not at all think that we are intended to take our Lord's words literally without regard to the circumstances and motives. Perhaps it helps us if we think of that other rule of conduct, 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.' If one considered what we should really feel right and reasonable if we were in the place of the asker, I think it might sometimes be clear that the request should not be granted. It seems rather as if the injunction meant that we should act in a liberal and ungrudging spirit as regards our possessions, because, if taken literally, the least deserving people would often despoil others of all they had and so prevent the good use of their money and stewardship."

Early in 1891, Ann Hunt's beloved friends Elizabeth and Hannah Southall experienced a succession of bereavements in a very short time. Next door to them lived a widowed aunt (by marriage) Anne Southall, and her daughter, a cousin, Mary Anna, with whom they were very intimate, and who laboured with them in many of the good works which were carried on in the town or in connection with Leominster Meeting. This dear cousin died first, in February, after a short illness, her aged mother following her only a few weeks afterwards; and then, towards the end of March, came the unexpected blow of the death of their brother John's wife at their home

near Ross, Herefordshire. A. Hunt felt the deepest sympathy with her beloved friends, and shared in their sorrow. She wrote thus of the first of these bereavements to Hannah Southall :

"It is indeed a sorrowful, and as we call it, a mysterious dispensation, for this beloved and efficient one was so greatly wanted according to our view—can be so ill spared. It seems impossible at present to realise it, one looks round on the different places left vacant, above all on the *home*, and can well understand that touching query, 'What shall I do ?' * The heart turns for rest from such thoughts to the sure Refuge, which never failed anyone yet, and will not now. But one needs it very much. How blessed the assurance that our God is a very present help in trouble."

Again during the mother's illness :

To Hannah Southall.

"I desire to go with thee now in the only way in which it is possible. Would that any feeble desires of mine could uphold thee under this fresh experience of the shadow of the valley. Him that had the power of death is indeed destroyed, and life and immortality are the fit subjects of our thought now. . . . Dear ——— is with you, I expect. . . . Very tenderly do I feel for him—called away from abounding public interests to the differing duty of the sick or dying room. What a blessing that no separate preparation is required for the most public or the most hidden service, all being done, as I know it is with him, as unto the Lord."

* Said by the poor aged mother on hearing of her daughter's death.

In reference to the death of Elizabeth T. Southall (wife of John T. Southall) she says :

To Hannah Southall.

"29th of Third Month, 1891.

"I feel it such a blessing that the dear one leaving her own was able to speak to them. At the time I think it impossible to realise fully the value of such parting words. I have found the exceeding preciousness of such myself only increasing as years go on. . . . It is needless to say that I shall think of you as I can on Fourth-day. May there be as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

To J. S. Fry.

"4th of Fourth Month, 1891.

"It is indeed remarked how in one form or other sorrow prevails. Do we not feel sure that a perfectly loving and all-powerful Ruler of all Kings would not suffer this to be so if there were not a blessing within reach of the sufferer which does really make the affliction but for a moment, not worthy to be compared with the result? But oh it is hard to recognise this."

To the same.

"Clevedon,

"1st of Fifth Month, 1891.

"We have been thinking of the wedding at —— to-day. It always seems difficult to give the appropriate amount of feeling to the different interests that arise, calling forth sensations so diverse. I think it is mercifully ordered that, unless in very exceptional cases, these matters stand apart from one another, occupy, as it were, a different niche in the mind, so

that the sadness of one does not overshadow the joy of another. There may be something like rejoicing with them that rejoice side by side with the weeping with them that weep. Certainly the latter feeling is rather uppermost now."

To M. Sturge (*then absent from home*).

"Clevedon,

"30th of Fourth Month, 1891.

"I was truly glad to have thy letter. When expatriated as I seem to feel everywhere else than at home, tidings from dear absent ones are of special value, and I do especially rejoice in the report thou wast able to give of you and yours. Dear I. S. seems held by a special bond that grew while she was so kind in reading to me, and which has not loosened—I think rather otherwise—in the ending of that. . . . Here we are having every advantage, pleasant and very comfortable lodgings every way, and it is nice to feel an almost childish delight in the beautiful country, the sweet tender spring-green, and the wealth of wild flowers which the kindness of one and another has enabled us to enjoy. Our friends here too are very kind. It is not selfish, I hope, to feel these as things given us richly to enjoy, though there is still so much and even near at hand that is of a different character."

To Isabel Gayner.

"Clevedon,

"8th of Fifth Month, 1891.

"When one looks at the young and the strong physically and the gifted mentally, blessed with every outward privilege, who are around us, how must we

long for that full tide of spiritual life the 'more abundantly' which would flow into all our channels, revive 'waste places,' overleap sometimes time-honoured barriers, yet bring life wherever it came. This is the true remedy against the red-tape-ism that is liable to hamper—not surely that any true order should be broken through. Yet while human nature is fallible failures must be expected. And it becomes us, each one, older and younger, to take heed to ourselves that we do not add to these or cause any to stumble through our own lack of a walk worthy of our high calling."

To Hannah Southall.

"8th of Seventh Month, 1891.

"This matter of giving does appear to me one of the most difficult of the age, pressing as painfully, perhaps more so, on those who have little to give as on the more largely endowed. Surely some better mode will be found out than the universal begging which often feels to me like a moral picking of pockets. In the meantime, and certainly I do not expect to outlive the present mode, there is probably but one satisfactory way of defence, by each one doing according to his or her several ability, and enduring what is beyond power to relieve. . . . There seems to be an extraordinary influx and gathering of royal personages in London now about these weddings, the real and the 'silver' ones. So far one can sympathise, but it does seem very odd that the favourite entertainment provided for a foreign visitor should be our preparations for defence against him, or if need be, for attacking his country—to show him how well we could do it. However, this

seems to be considered the correct thing, and, curiously enough, it seems to be equally enjoyed by both parties."

To Rebecca Zaytoun.

"27th of Eighth Month, 1891.

"How little we know of the future! But we are allowed to let the morrow take thought for itself, and perhaps one meaning of this may be that while we are endeavouring to live to-day in accord with our dear Lord's wish, we may believe that a preparation will be given to receive to-morrow's experience, whatever it may be, in a like spirit of trust and resignation of will. I have often been thankful in noticing this in smaller and greater matters, how what looked so formidable and full of trouble when at a distance, comes, as it were, almost easily when the time for it arrives, and can even be received with thankfulness. . . . It is so much more gratifying to our human nature to feel lively emotions such as love and joy, that I think there is sometimes a snare in the desire and endeavour to arouse them. Our Saviour, who knew so entirely what his disciples would need, did not teach them to ask for feelings of this kind, but taught the prayer, 'Thy will be done,' and surely this seems to include all. If it is our earnest desire that His will should be done in us and by us, I do not think we need to distress ourselves because our feeling of life is low—so many causes lead to this—while the allegiance of the soul is unchanged, and I believe we may even, as respects changes of feeling, take the exhortation, 'Be careful for nothing but in everything,' etc. There are some

lines in one of A. L. Waring's hymns that I often think of :

> ' I was not called to walk alone,
> To clothe myself with love and light,
> And for Thy glory, not my own,
> My soul is precious in Thy sight.
> My evil heart can never be
> A home, a heritage for me,
> But Thou canst make it fit for Thee.'

" . . . I think sometimes we lose comfort and strength from not realising as we might the fulness and freeness of the love of God in Christ our Saviour. I feel how very far I have been from doing this—how much loss I have sustained—and so I want to encourage thee to keep this thought before thy mind and heart. ' Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' Well, then, we know something of what human love can be, how it bears with faults and endures suffering—and has no pleasure so great as in adding to the happiness of the loved one. And so when we feel so unworthy and so unlovely in the Divine sight, may we not feel that His compassions are over us, that He is teaching us even by these trials and this liability to temptation and sin, teaching us to lean more closely upon Him, and to prove more and more how great His loving-kindness is. In this way joy and peace spring up in the heart. Sometimes I am afraid that the ' Army ' teaching is at fault here, by giving an idea that somehow or other people are to be raised into a state of freedom from their soul's enemies—are to go henceforth in continual rejoicing and triumph ; and sometimes it is to be feared they lay aside the spiritual armour and find to their great loss that the fiery darts have not lost

their power. I know it is otherwise with many, but there seems to me a danger in this kind of teaching, and the continual profession of an experience in the same line. Oh, how needful for everyone who thinks he stands to take heed lest he fall."

To F. S. Fry.

"9, Brunswick Square,

"2nd of Ninth Month, 1891.

"How thankful we ought to feel, and I trust I do to some extent, for that 'renewing of the Holy Spirit' whereby dear Friends are enabled to meet the daily and varied claims upon them with a calmness of spirit and a freshness of life which is a wonder and a blessing. May it continue to be so, in our Lord's great mercy and care for the Church. Truly we may well pray for those who go forth among the heathen. Many such prayers are going up this evening. But it often seems to me that for the round of home and business duties—the ever recurring, varying calls on the spiritual life and faculties, in the experience of many not spoken of as in the mission field, a no less supply of grace and of fresh anointing is indispensable—that the prayer for the sustaining and comfort of these is no less the duty and the privilege of the Church. I long to make use of it *more*, according to my small capacity."

To Hannah Southall.

"1st of Tenth Month, 1891.

"And so, dearest partner, the months and the years go on. How many have passed since I and thou first met each other. I, a grown woman with the interests of life thick upon me, thou a little child

full of intelligence, ready for those interests in thy future life. And how little could any one have guessed what we were to be to each other! what most especially thou hast been to me during a partnership of years—in illness, in sorrow, in deep conflict and perplexity—and what to those linked indissolubly to my own life. But so does a merciful Providence arrange for us beyond all that we could have ventured to ask or think. And now that life has come into a calmer period, not with fewer interests, but of a less exacting and distracting kind, let not our partnership be less real, though I trust it may be less distressing in its effects upon thee, dearest cousin. If it be indeed with me that at evening time it is light, I would that special beams of the light might rest on thee, helping to illuminate thy own path as it shines more and more unto the perfect day. I can never be thankful enough for the blessing bestowed on my late years, nor fail to desire to encourage every one to hold up their heads in hope, even when the billows seem ready to overwhelm. . . .

"I am sure thou would be interested in the work going on here away in the school and mission line, and the energy of some of our younger members in carrying it on. In the villages especially, and in one of the suburbs here, there is quite a new departure. Whenever any Adult School is opened scholars flock in, and there does seem an appreciation of our distinctive views which is very interesting."

Soon after this letter was written her niece, Catherine Hunt, died. She and her sister, Anne M., had latterly resided not very far from their aunt's home.

To J. S. Fry.

"9, Brunswick Square,

"22nd of Tenth Month, 1891.

"My Dear Friend,

"I should not like thee to hear only by casual report, or by the announcement in the newspaper, of the removal of one of our family circle, who has filled rather an important position in it. My dear niece Catherine had been unwell for more than a week, and for some days a doctor had been in attendance, . . . but there seemed to be no apprehension of immediate danger. The end came, however, at about 4 p.m. As yet it is difficult to realise the change that has taken place. For her we may fully believe that it is a blessed one, and the gracious Lord who has ordered it knows all that will be involved to those who remain here. He can make up for all, and give wisdom and sufficient grace."

Ann Hunt, like others who live to advanced age, was repeatedly experiencing the loss not only of contemporaries, but of those dear to her who were much younger than herself. Towards the end of this year, in allusion to her niece's death, she wrote in her diary, "Another bereavement; may our precious Lord comfort and sanctify."

To the same.

"7th of Tenth Month, 1891.

"It is true, as thou sayest, that the nearness of spirit seems rather helped than hindered by outward distance. Perhaps the crowd of surroundings are less present to our spirits when they rise overhead of them all, to meet one too far away to have any

share in the pressure. Anyway, it seems to me that this endowment of the spirit belongs to the citizenship which is in heaven, and surely will be perfected there. May we not humbly trust that it will be so, through rich and free mercy in our Lord and Saviour."

To the same.

"8th of Twelfth Month, 1891.

"It is indeed a time when the uncertainty of every earthly plan and thing is brought strongly into view. Well may I at my age feel it, and I think I do, though not to the profit that I would desire. It does not, however—and I could not wish it—at all lessen interest in the affairs of life so linked as they are with the interests of the world unseen that one cannot separate the two. . . .

"Thank thee much, my dear friend, for thy kind thought about me. It is not often that I feel my small engagements to be more than I can comfortably get through, and I do indeed feel inexpressibly the tender compassion whereby I am spared crushing trials and anxieties of former years, and a measure of health and capacity granted for entering into the interests of others. I desire to be ready for any change in these respects, and to trust the same unfailing mercy for myself and all my dear friends and relatives. While we continue here it feels a privilege—surely it is graciously afforded—to realise our fellowship one with another, and to uphold each other by prayer and sympathy. I do feel the sweetness of this, and often long that it was more sensibly in exercise than the press of life seems to allow opportunity for."

To Isabel Gayner.

"15th of First Month, 1892.

"I have missed thee much, dear child, but have been comforted by the hope that this laying aside is not attended by serious symptoms, and I hope before long it may be safe for thee to do as usual. It is not needful for me to enjoin patience in doing this. Thou wilt have every advantage as to advice and care. But, dear Isabel, it is and must be to all of us, I think, a time of solemn thought. I feel it so, not so much as to the call for the preparation for death (though that perhaps specially concerns *me*), but as to what is indeed but another aspect of it—the vast importance of making a right use of life while it is given. One feels so strongly that there is no time that any one can afford to lose. The young and the prosperous cut off while only preparing to live, only entering on the expected work of life. And now we rejoice when the end comes at any period, early or late, when we feel that thus far the service has been rendered, the end for which life was given has been answered, that the Lord's gracious purpose has been fulfilled as regards that one whom He has redeemed. And feeling this, as I do, though very insufficiently, I do not feel able to repine over any of that gracious Lord's ways of training His dear children, those whom He may be calling into some special service, though we might like to spare some of the lessons. I do believe this training goes on through health and sickness, by means of joys and sorrows, even through fulness of spiritual enjoyment and a deep sense of poverty and unworthiness—all this and much more goes on in the maturing of fruit under

the great Husbandman. And so, my precious child, may this period of pause in outward engagements, good as they are in their season, be accompanied by a drinking in as of the dew of heaven. There may not be a recognised shower of blessings. The physical condition often inclines to inactivity even spiritually, but do not let that be any discouragement. Thy Redeemer knows it all, and He is strong though thou art weak, and He will provide all things needful for the soul as well as for the body. Even as regards the sustenance of the spiritual life there is a right sense in obeying the injunction to be careful (overmuch) for nothing. Only may He on whom we rest our spirits, keep them in subjection to Himself, ever looking unto Jesus, for in so doing alone, I believe, can we run with patience the race set before us, and know the victory intended for us in the end. . . . Accept these few lines in token of loving remembrance from thy motherly friend,

"A. HUNT."

To Hannah Southall.

"1st of Second Month, 1892.

"So we begin another month. It is wonderful to see the developing of things around one, and the great wheels moving on while the insects of an hour, comparatively, are permitted to watch. It is granted even to me to do this for a little longer, while I see all around those called away who seem to have a tighter hold of their position. But the wise Director of all knows. . . . I was much interested in hearing of the employment of thy quiet hours over those letters. That is a mode of retrospection from

which I shrink, almost more than any other; but happily there are few memories in which such skeletons are enshrined. And now, in the 'evening light' I can bear better to look into the recesses. Thankfulness ought to enwrap the forms of terror as with the garment of praise—and so in some poor way it sometimes does.—Here was an interruption. I find too, that having a home companion tells on my correspondence, for when 'interviews,' etc., have occupied most of the day, it seems too unsociable to settle down in the evening to write letters, so claims of this kind accumulate. Dear Phyllis, I rejoice to say, seems very well, and we are still favoured in the matter of health as a household."

To J. S. Fry.

"9, Brunswick Square,

"9th of Third Month, 1892.

"Different, widely, as our circumstances are in many ways, there is yet also something of likeness. . . . Far more than this, there has been some fellowship in service, poor as my share has been, and in concern for the welfare of others, especially in the 'shepherding of the flock.' This makes me long to share with thee any encouragement that falls in my way in this respect; and I have been made especially thankful by the assurance given by several of our new younger members of our Ministry and Oversight Meeting of the value they attach to this privilege, and for the effect evident in more earnestness in seeking spiritual good. The only occasion on which some of these have been present was felt to be a time of blessing, as one of the youngest said to me, 'It was a

quickening meeting.' It makes one feel *our* responsibility afresh. Thou dost not need any reminder of that kind. But I think I never felt so much—though insufficiently still—the solemn character of that which we speak of as 'a gift in the ministry.' The wonderful condescension—the greatness of the trust committed to the frail 'vessel'—the need that this should indeed be kept fit for the Master's use—and then the responsibility for the exercise—for the occupation of so high a stewardship. I sometimes fear whether we, many of us who have even a small share, think of these things enough—whether there is not something in the high vocation to which we fail to give due heed, and so fail, in lowliness of mind to apprehend it. I do not know whether in any way we might be more helpful one to another in this respect. But I do feel strongly how important this branch of the service is, which the gracious Head of the Church designs for His followers. I hope I do not seem to write complainingly, or unthankfully as to the blessing in this way enjoyed in our Meeting. Far otherwise; from one time to another I recognise it with thanksgiving as respects others, though often with humiliation for myself, and I long that we may help one another in pressing forward, and reaching forth to the highest standard set before us."

To the same.

"Clevedon, 25th of Fourth Month, 1892.

"There was a sorrow cast over the occasion by the decease of M. B., of Ross, a valued Friend, who will be much missed in the little Meeting there. She had been almost like a mother to —— and his family,

and very much felt their expected removal from the neighbourhood. There will be no distances now to separate their spirits. Perhaps this is more easily recognised when the earthly habitation is no longer thought of, and yet the communion of spirit even while here below is a precious reality. It would be a loss, indeed, if it were not so. The meeting here yesterday morning was rather large. . . . I ventured a few sentences also, addressed to any who might feel as having nothing to draw with, and that the well is deep—while to such He who is Himself the fountain is offering the living water.

"Oh, my dear friend, *how* inadequate are such poor words as mine! I often feel as if no more could be uttered, and yet how comforting to know that the very poorest offering may be accepted, may be blessed. We were reading this morning that chapter in Daniel where it tells of his prayer and confessions of the sins of his people, and how the assurance came that from the beginning of his supplication the answer was determined—that he was greatly beloved. Yet how great had been his humiliation. Surely we know more about our access than had been revealed to him. Do we make use of it as we might individually and as a Church—as those bound together by a common exercise for the conversion of sinners and the building up in the faith and hope of the Gospel?"

The customary visit to Clevedon was paid this year in company with Elizabeth and Hannah Southall, as well as Phyllis Rowe. The spring was particularly variable, and the change proved

of little advantage to the aged member of the party, who, moreover, had to encounter fresh claims on her attention immediately on her return home. She had an attack of indisposition, which, though not very acute, brought down her little strength, and occasioned some anxiety to her friends. On the 20th of May, 1892, she wrote in pencil to one of her young friends: "I am getting on not very fast, but have every abounding care, and *more*." She improved gradually, and was able as usual in the summer to set her friend Phyllis Rowe free for a few months, the interval being filled up in part by various relatives or friends. While she was still far from well, her feelings of tender sympathy were much awakened by the sudden death of Emily Sturge—elder sister of her friend Helen M. Sturge—who lost her life by a fall from her horse on the morning of June 3rd, 1892. She was a person of much ability, and had long been a member of the Bristol School Board, where, by single-minded devotion to her work she had acquired a position and obtained a hold on the hearts of teachers and scholars of a quite uncommon kind. Her death, with the manner of its occurrence, was a shock to the whole city, and the funeral at the Friends' burying ground at "The Friars" was almost of a public character. Early information of E. Sturge's death was sent to A. Hunt by the writer, to prevent her, if possible, from hearing it in any other way. The two following letters, addressed to myself, refer to this subject:

To Matilda Sturge.

"9, Brunswick Square,

"6th of Sixth Month, 1892.

"I feel as if I must send a few lines to thee, my very dear friend, though truly there is much more to feel than to say at this solemn time, and I need not tell you that all of me that can be present with those gathered at 'The Friars' to-morrow afternoon will be there. . . . How much we have all longed that more mercies may be wrapped as in this cloud to 'break in blessings.' It must be gratifying to feel the high and affectionate appreciation of what she has been, and truly the loss is great. I have felt a longing, especially of late, to know something more of dear Emily, a feeling as if there was *that* which would respond if only it could be reached, and I used to think that perhaps opportunity would be given. I do not know that any was neglected, nor do I suppose for a moment that any such poor help of mine was needed. Yet such events are, indeed, solemn warnings to us all that the day's work should be faithfully done. I want to say again how much I valued thy kindness in writing. The newspaper reports alone would have been doubly a shock and a distress. And what it must have been to you to hear of, dear loving aunts, with hearts so full of care and interest as regards all concerned. . . . Dear love is with you from

"Thy own friend,

"A. Hunt."

To the same.

"Later, First-day, 23rd.

"I have finished the 'Portrait in Outline'* now, and find it even more interesting than I expected,

* A sketch of Emily Sturge, by M.S. Printed for private circulation.

which is saying a great deal. Perhaps it is a proof of the self-love which she says clings so closely to us, that I can but feel afresh the wish to have known her ; but often as we met, and I longed for it, no way opened. There was a hope for it in the future often, especially of later time, yet it is in unison with the 'broken arc' that it should be as it is. She wrote of that prophetically as it were, and you took up the idea so remarkably by the words on the card. We see not now, but surely there will be nothing left imperfect or disjointed when the fulness of time comes."

To explain the allusion here made a few words may be quoted from the unpublished sketch before mentioned.

" It is difficult in such a case, when the end has been so sudden, and to our apprehension so untimely, to say that

> 'Death has rounded to a full completeness
> The statue of her life!'

" Rather we may apply another simile suggested by herself in the words (in her note book) :

" 'It is all a perplexing problem, and would be utterly insoluble if one regarded this life as anything but a phase—a link in a chain : a minute arc of that great circle the sweep of which we cannot see.'

" Her friends had not read this sentence when they chose as a motto for her memorial card those lines of Browning:

> 'On the earth the broken arc,
> In the Heaven the perfect round.'"

To J. S. Fry.

"9, Brunswick Square,

"10th of Sixth Month, 1892.

"Surely goodness and mercy followed me, making the latter years of life though not without trials, the happiest portion of it. . . . How comforting it is that the nearness of fellowship and anything permitted of spiritual communion, are unaffected by any change of circumstances—by any knowledge or any ignorance of them. I have thought of it as being a faint emblem, perhaps rather a faint reflection of that unalterable Love which enwraps our spirits, even when the mists and clouds around prevent us from being fully sensible of its presence, or enjoying its soul-warming power. We can indeed desire this for one another."

To John Gayner.

"26th of Sixth Month, 1892.

"I did not attempt the meeting this morning, though quite feeling the loss of privilege. This, however, was lessened by a very nice visit of —— with ——. It is long since I was in a room with him, and I could well trace the effect on his countenance of years of growth in grace. The expression tells of this in a striking degree. I felt his call to be a true privilege, and shall think of him and his service in future with a warm personal interest. . . . I don't know whether it is quite out of date to send a birthday greeting, but times and seasons have to extend their influence beyond the dates in the almanack. I think that this is the case especially with birthdays in later life. They are no

longer times of looking forward as with younger persons. The tendency is to look back. . . . Yet it seems to me that just the contrary is the appropriate privilege offered to us, even though we may, and I have cause enough to do so, feel that a poor use has been made of the opportunities offered, the talents given, the goodness and the mercy that have followed. Are not these failings and even worse than these 'blotted out' with all that was included in the handwriting that was against us, having been taken out of the way 'nailing it to His cross.' We are bidden to rejoice in Christ Jesus. This is the only ground of rejoicing, . . . but our souls' enemy is ever ready to present other objects of thought, and try to bring again into the spirit of bondage, weakening for service those whom the Lord would make strong in His own joy. . . . May it be so more and more, 'forgetting the things that are behind' as far as they hamper or distress, and reaching forward towards the glorious prize of which there is even now granted a very blessed earnest."

To J. S. Fry.

"9, Brunswick Square,

"9th of Twelfth Month, 1892.

"We seem almost to have lost a personal friend in J. G. Whittier. Yet we must be thankful that a long period of feebleness has been spared him. How many are being gathered in. As the eternal world is brought nearer, the sense of its influence on and connection with our present state of being seems to grow stronger—the interest of life increases rather than fades with advancing years."

To Helen M. Sturge (then at Rome).

"It was a great pleasure to have thy letter, dearest Helen. It would have been responded to sooner, only it takes more than inclination to bring thoughts from the brain and feelings from the heart through the pen to the paper. And yet I think there is a kind of communion going on just as easily between the old place here and Italy as when but half a mile lies between us. We do indeed, as thou and Thomas à Kempis say, take ourselves with us, or they stay. And so we are continually wanting a remedy for the trouble they give. I think we are intended to find it. What does good Whittier say?

> 'O Friend! no proof beyond this yearning,
> This outbreak of our hearts we need,
> God will not mock the hope He giveth,
> No love He prompts shall vainly plead.'

"And surely this is applicable to the longing after Himself, the delivering power of His Spirit, as to the yearning after departed friends. That dear good man is gone to prove what he so firmly believed in. I am sorry not to have heard any particulars as to his death. If they have been given anywhere, I have not met with it. My reading is fragmentary of necessity, yet I am very thankful to use my eyes I think rather better than a few weeks ago, also to be very nicely in general health, which, I know, thou wilt kindly be pleased to be told. I have not half thanked thee for thy letter, so full of interest in different ways, and in that beautifully clear hand-writing, which added to the enjoyment of reading it, exceptional as such combinations are. . . . The weather seems quite broken up now. This is a thoroughly wet day—

such as must seem very far away from you in the land of sunshine and beauty. And yet, would we change this dear dirty place for all the glories in atmosphere and grandeur of temples? But I think that wonderful figure in the Apostle's writings when he says: 'Ye are the *temple* of the living God' must come more vividly home to the feelings amid so much of beauty and grandeur of design and workmanship, on which so much labour and thought have been bestowed. In a sense this puts our lukewarmness to shame. We do not endeavour as we ought to make these human temples fit for such indwelling."

To Rebecca Zaytoun.

"12th of Tenth Month, 1892.

"This one thing I do, forgetting the past and pressing forward—I think I never saw such point and force in the text before. But I have thought in my own case that time, peace of mind and any measure of spiritual strength depended upon this—forgetting in a sense the past, leaving it to the same mercy in which I am permitted to trust for the present and future. I think that thoughts of this bitter overlooking of events gone by are often made a temptation and great cause of weakness. They are to be turned from as well as prayed against. We are, too, very incompetent judges of the effect of the events we look back upon, especially if we did not see at the time what we now see. Our Father in Heaven knows all and we were then even as now under His gracious notice. I think we are safe in leaving it all in His merciful hand. Nothing shall separate us from the love of Christ, not things present, nor to come—surely

not things that are past. Let the remembrance only lead us to press forward more diligently—to reach forward to the blessed goal."

About this time Ann Hunt wrote and distributed the following letter, addressed :

"To the Ministers in our Meeting.

"Dear Friends,—In the midst of many engagements it is not easy to find opportunities for meeting together, and this must be my excuse for asking you to read a few lines on a subject which has been much on my heart of late. It is indeed of much interest to us all. We shall, I doubt not, all agree that among the gifts bestowed on the Church by Him whom we especially acknowledge as its Head, that which we speak of as a 'gift in the ministry' is of a high order, involving great responsibility. Even a small share in it brings this conviction home. The views held by our Society on this point seem to be especially important, not only as a protest against all money recompense for spiritual benefit, but as a continual testimony to the immediate and perceptible operation of the Holy Spirit upon the spirit of man, guiding his thoughts and directing all his faculties into their right line of service. We know that much of assumption has resulted from the setting apart of a priestly caste ; but there are dangers on every hand, and while we disclaim any thought of superiority over their brethren for those who are called to the ministry of the word, is it not possible that this high privilege and solemn service may be undervalued, even by those on whom it has been bestowed?—that the waiting on the ministry may be crowded out to some extent at least by the pressure of other claims ?

"Those who are much engaged in business or in philanthropic work, or are weighted by family cares and anxieties, do indeed require the continual supply of grace—the fresh anointing from time to time to enable them to occupy the spiritual gifts entrusted to them faithfully and to the honour of God. In the endeavour to do this surely we all need the sympathy and the prayerful help one of another. It was easier formerly to find opportunities for giving and receiving such help. When anything made it desirable, Friends, either Ministers or Elders, could easily come together for conference at the close of a meeting for worship. It is different now. The *need* continues, perhaps increases, as the sphere of service widens, both as to character and in extent. But there is not, perhaps there cannot be, any corresponding change to supply the need. Our Meetings on Ministry and Oversight, interesting and valuable as these are, scarcely afford the occasion for a confidential reference to a service which rests mainly on a few of those present. Yet is there not a fitting place for closer communion among these? Separated as they are in the hurry of life and surrounded by influences widely differing in character, there would seem to be some danger lest the bond of fellowship should be weakened—the unity of the Spirit less sensibly felt. Would not a blessing be found in sometimes coming together, waiting on the Lord for the renewal of strength and unitedly seeking grace to help in time of need? There is much in the present position of our Society which calls for very serious thought and needs a wisdom beyond that of man. Surely He who giveth liberally will bestow the spirit of judgment and will strengthen

with all might those who are asking these blessings in humble and confiding prayer.

"May none of us lose sight of our high calling, nor miss the privilege of being helpers one of another in the faith and hope of the Gospel.

"Your affectionate friend,

"A.H."

CHAPTER X.

" For us whatever's undergone,
Thou knowest, willest what is done ;
Grief may be joy misunderstood,
Only the good discerns the good ;
I trust Thee while the days go on.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

THE year 1892 had drawn quietly to its close, and in the first month of the New Year Ann Hunt was expecting Phyllis Rowe to come for her usual winter visit. The latter had been staying for a short time with another Friend in the neighbourhood, and whilst there was seized suddenly with influenza in a severe and painful form. The Friend she had been visiting entreated her to remain and be nursed at her house, but Phyllis Rowe preferred going to Brunswick Square, as had been previously arranged. She arrived there on the afternoon of January 16th, and on the 20th, after a few days of great anxiety, she passed quietly away. It was a severe shock, and the difficulties which often attend sudden and alarming illness were in this case neither few nor slight. The way in which Ann Hunt bore this unexpected trial was an illustration of her faith. She received it in

meek submission, and while feeling deeply the loss of so kind a friend, she indulged in no vain regrets about anything that had been done or left undone—acting herself according to the advice she had given to her niece Rebecca Zaytoun—never to do this where the aim and endeavour of those concerned had been to do that which was right. There were many others who mourned for Phyllis Rowe, who had been known and loved in the circle of Friends in Bristol and elsewhere. She was one in whom the Christian graces shone with no uncertain light; disregard of self and consideration for others seemed natural to her; she shared in many of Ann Hunt's interests, and seemed during her long visits to be the very companion that she needed.

The vacant place left by this great loss was filled for the next few weeks by a cousin who was truly glad to render any help, and a more permanent arrangement was made with a friend some months afterwards, as it had become evident even to herself that it was not well she should be left alone. Ann Hunt had taken an interest in Mary C. Salmon, who had joined Friends a few years before, and had cherished a wish to live with and assist her aged friend; so it was decided to try this plan, which afterwards became permanent. It was not, however, till the summer that she actually came, to bestow, as it proved, her care and affection to the end. Ann Hunt's sight had failed again, and her letters from about this time appear to have been less full and

frequent. Yet she was never lacking when she thought she could give help or comfort to any of her friends.

To Hannah Southall.

"6th of First Month, 1893.

"Yes, last year was indeed a perplexed and trying one to many; I trust that the present one may bring more of rest to you, and, if it may be so, of repair and restoration. . . . My sympathies are warmly with dear ——. The experiences of aunthood are in a sphere of service and suffering by no means understood or appreciated generally, in my opinion. You know a good deal about it, and so do I, in large measure."

To the same.

"2nd of Third Month, 1893.

(In allusion to the religious visit of a party of Friends to Bristol Meeting.)

"I do want very much to write to thee, but intentions are so often frustrated. We have gone through those meetings now, and the Friends are all gone. . . . It is truly encouraging to observe what different and what really grand gifts are bestowed on some members of our Church. And yet, as the greatest forces are made up by combinations of lesser, perhaps the most work of all is done through the faithful use of the smaller gifts, those least noticed by man. Well, about these meetings. They have been really remarkable times, nothing like them has occurred during the seventy years over which I can look back. Not that I could agree with everything

said and done, but it is impossible not to feel that a good work was going on in the experience of very many, and I have not *met* with any one who did not feel helped in some way, though unable to accept all."

To F. S. Fry.

"Portishead, 17th of Fifth Month, 1893.

"I need hardly say that I think much of what lies before Friends in London. There must be decisions made of great importance to our branch of the Church, even perhaps far beyond its visible limits. . . . I desire to take such share as is possible to me in the exercise of spirit which the occasion will bring, and in seeking for the guidance so greatly needed. . . . Perhaps it is a mistake, but my great fear is lest a separating spirit should get a hold among us, lest those that look at truth under differing aspects, and set a special value on that portion which they see most clearly, should conclude that there is some real contradiction of the truth itself involved in the view which differs from their own, and so there might be a division which would tend to extreme views on both sides. I will not trouble thee with needless words. I know how truly we both feel in whom alone our help lies. He has been mindful of us, and will be so still. May we be permitted again to bless His name!"

Portishead had been selected this year instead of Clevedon for her annual change, partly on account of the little Meeting there, which had recently been incorporated with Bristol and Frenchay Monthly Meeting. On her return she writes thus:

To Hannah Southall.

"I am safely at home again, looking back on much privilege in health and comfort of companionship, all things to be acknowledged with thankfulness. Welcome letters awaited me here, one from dear C. R. Charleton, telling me a little of your Yearly Meeting proceedings. . . . All information is so especially welcome in its freshness. Now I feel entering as it were into the world again, the world and its various interests. It seemed almost like being out of it at Portishead, and yet that is my ignorance, for the world is everywhere."

To Alice M. Sturge.

"23rd of Eleventh Month, 1893.

"I do often wonder what there is to repay any of my dear young friends for the effort of coming into this remote region, unless indeed it is the pleasure of doing a kindness. Much as I love, and long to help them in any way, there feels so little qualification for it that I am ready to lament our opportunities to some extent wasted, leading as I fear to disappointment on their part. Let us hope that it may not be so in the future, if a future be given."

To J. S. Fry.

"23rd of Eleventh Month, 1893.

"Though I am afraid I come to thee by note almost too often, I must ask thee to accept a warm acknowledgment of thy very kind birthday greeting, . . . not in the least less acceptable because I entered on my eighty-fourth year just a month earlier. It feels wonderful to have lived so long, and

the retrospect would be overwhelming in its sadness were it not for some sense graciously given of the mercy which is over all. Few can have more reason than I for desiring to forget the things that are behind in their sorrows, conflicts, and failures. But surely the remembrance heightens the sense and deepens the value of the undeserved love, of the sparing mercy experienced in these latest days. Can I do otherwise than long that those who have yet years of life before them (as well as for my own short period), should indeed be whole-hearted, fervent in spirit, diligent in the service of so gracious a God and Saviour."

To L. Hunt.

"2nd of Twelfth Month, 1893.

"I can hardly say what a deep interest thy letter has been to me. I was almost afraid mine to thee would have failed to be of any value, I felt it so short of what I would have said, that I could not wonder if it failed to elicit more than a bare acknowledgment. But it seems as if heart influences come to inspire even unspeaking words. I am sure, dear child, they came with thine. . . . My heart has asked for thee, does so still, and yet with a comfort in the thought that the branch which beareth fruit has to be pruned that it may bring forth more fruit. As has been well said the gardener in doing this has to cut deep. Be it as it may we are assured that infinite love cannot suffer needless pain or real injury to be inflicted on those who are looking to His love and power for help. Do not be discouraged because the way is dark for a time. We are apt to expect that when deep or keen trial comes we ought to feel a

sensible support, something that sweetens the bitter cup. It is so sometimes, no doubt, but I do not think when the proving is the closest. It has been so in my experience, and yet afterwards I could not doubt that there had been a preserving hand held out, that a shield had protected, and that the struggle which to my feelings was as a death strife had been watched over and made to result in some freshness of life. So it is that we have to be weaned from earthly dependence, and taught our own weakness and helplessness by humbling experiences."

To Alice M. Sturge.

"8th of Twelfth Month, 1893.

"As respects thyself I have not at all said how much I feel for thee in this long confinement and trial, as I am sure it must be in various ways. I know how much there is besides the bodily suffering caused by any malady, which is hard to bear—calling for more patience and submission than the pain or illness itself, and I think this is specially the case when the malady is not very acute, and therefore does not excite the sympathy, or deprive one of the desire for active life which attend more urgent attacks. . . . I should be truly glad to hear that more decided improvement was taking place. But whether this be so or not, and however much the depressing influences may be felt, do not for a moment suppose that any strange thing has happened to thee, nor that thou art less under the loving care, or less in the favour of Him who knows alike our bodily and mental frame, than if every thing in thy outward life was prosperous and happy. We are apt to accept the truth in theory that 'whom the Lord loveth He

chasteneth,' and assurances as to the benefit of affliction, but when the trial comes it seems so different, it is so hard to recognise and accept it as a proof of love, and as being for our benefit 'that we may be partakers of holiness.' We want this blessing to come in some other way, and so are apt to 'faint when we are rebuked of Him.' I long that it may not be so with thee, and perhaps I am writing that which is quite beside the mark in suggesting it, yet I know thou wilt accept the loving sympathy that prompts it."

To Hannah Southall.

"15th of Second Month, 1894.

"I want, if I can, to send though only a few lines by the mail to-morrow, to say how I prized the letter written before thou left, and how I think of thee in thy new experiences. Partners we are still in heart, though our experiences are so diverse at present. Thine in all the bustle and changes of travel, and I still in one room, from whence, however, thought does travel, and share to some extent what goes on in the world, looking out through the loopholes of retreat. . . . There is so very much going on, missions, lectures, meetings on almost every conceivable subject. And yet how many fail to get the one thing needful. How much one feels this, and that it *is* the one thing needful. . . . I must not write more now, only say how well and more than kindly I am cared for. Thy loving heart will be glad that it is so. I cannot be thankful or grateful enough.

"Ever thy own,

"A. Hunt."

To J. S. Fry.

"10th of Third Month, 1894.

"Now that it is all I can do to unite *in spirit* in public service, I almost think there is a deeper feeling of the reality and the momentous character of the truths spoken of than when able to take a little share oneself. There does seem to be a widespread longing after fresh spiritual life, though one hardly knows what some who use the expression mean by it. Yet surely the longing is designed to be satisfied."

To L. Hunt.

"16th of Third Month, 1894.

"I do not like this hiatus in our intercourse, my dear child, so that I am not altogether stirred up to write by the recollection that thy birthday is to-morrow, though that has a place of added interest. I know thou wilt have many letters, but no one can write for me, and there are few indeed who can feel quite as I do, for thou art very near my heart, and thou hast allowed me to come near to thine, even the inner temple. And this being so, changes of circumstance cannot bring a feeling of strangeness. Nor any number of miles a sense of separation. But circumstances may and do prevent expression, even as they have done with us. . . . Perhaps some one has mentioned my being laid aside—though not seriously ill, my small powers have been additionally limited in the way of writing, as otherwise, for my sight goes down with the general health. I am very thankful to feel stronger now, and have to-day walked up and down a little in the sunshine, after being entirely in the house almost two months, much of the time upstairs. If I should continue as

well I hope to get to 'The Friars' on First-day, so that it seems like taking up life again for a little while. . . . I must not write much more. . . . When another birthday comes round may it be given thee to look back upon the interval with thankfulness for the way in which thou hast been led, and with fresh hope and dedication of heart for the future."

To J. S. Fry.

"Sixth of Fifth Month, 1894.

"There is much said, and rightly, to encourage the young and inexperienced, and to help them to dedicate themselves to the Lord's service, but I have been thinking how great also is the need of those who have been long engaged in this service, a need not only of the fresh anointing for the performance of it, but also of the consolation and joy which can come by the renewings of the Holy Spirit. As the burden of years and of varied labours increasingly tends to weigh down the spirits, the need is greater than ever perhaps for the rich supply whereby every vacant place can be filled and every weariness of spirit taken away.

"My dear friend, may we not feel assured that the God of comfort means His confiding children to enjoy such blessing?—that He is bestowing it even now, though the mental and spiritual pressure prevents it sometimes from being fully realised?"

To a young Friend.

"23rd of Sixth Month, 1894.

(After giving an account of a meeting.)

"I often fear lest the holding back of those on whom some service might rightly devolve is the cause

of others taking up a position for which they are not qualified. Perhaps it may be almost more from a shrinking from the preparation than from actual disobedience to the call when received, that this failure occurs. Is there not a danger of having the mind too full of other things, perhaps lawful in themselves, to give that first place to the service of Christ in whatever way that it surely deserves? And then, there is hardly the capacity to listen to the call and to say, 'Here am I; send me.' I do feel that these matters require much watching unto prayer. I have had such large experience of failure myself, and of dwarfishness in the spiritual life, that I do greatly long for those coming into every advantage, and with such possibilities before them, that nothing may be permitted to mar their usefulness or take away the blessing which is intended for others through them."

On the last day of 1894 Ann Hunt concluded a letter to Hannah Southall with these words: "This has been such a year of mercies bestowed and trial spared, that I look back upon it very thankfully, and would take that which may be given of another in more trust and so more devotedness—and would more earnestly commend my dear friends to Him who watches over them night and day, lest any hurt them."

CHAPTER XI.

"Saviour, Thou art not far away,
No need to make request,
Nor even, 'quickly come' to say,
But only in Thee rest.

"Some day, some hour, at word of Thine,
Shall break the silver cord—
The hope fulfilled, the rapture mine—
For ever with the Lord!"

M. S.

IN the early part of 1895 the weather was very severe, and Ann Hunt and myself met but seldom, she being much confined to the house, and I being also more restricted than usual in consequence of an illness the winter before. On January 9th she thus wrote:

To Matilda Sturge.

"MY EVER DEAR FRIEND,

"This morning has brought another disappointment to my hopes of our meeting, for even if thou art to be at 'The Friars,' which seems unlikely, I am staying at home for no better reason than the weather. I have felt the blank in our intercourse more than usual lately. It has lasted so much longer than I like or had intended. . . . I think it has made me think about the limitations that surround

our lives in a very realising way. As one looks back one can recognise these ; strong and even painful at the time, which are now removed ; but there come others quite different in kind, but putting a limit to one's doings, and in some sort to one's *beings*, in a very effectual way. I feel these tightening round me very sensibly. The sense of this is not joyous, and yet I do feel it such a blessing to know that there is an inner circle in the heart where the pressure of such bonds has no power. I have felt this now, beloved friend, as I have thought of thee, and know that the love and unity of spirit have no share in the outward separation. I feel, too, and this has been a comfort, that though health, or age, or anything else may prevent some lines of service, yet there must ever be a sphere—a place for the exercise of spiritual gifts—for shedding forth such influence for good as one may be privileged to have, though knowing not how. However, all this, which I had no thought of saying, does not prevent a somewhat special desire to hear of thee, and to know how you are both bearing this cold and snow. I hope to see your M. this afternoon : she kindly proposed coming before going to Cambridge again, and others of your nieces I hope to see this week."

It was indeed true that her limitations were increasing, although only in an outward sense : she remarked in a scrap addressed to Isabel Grace (*née* Gayner) :

"How full life is of interest ! None the less, I think even more so, up to the end—one sees so much more clearly what it all means."

The frequent intercourse with visitors, in which she recognised a line of service committed to her trust, was about to receive a check. In the beginning of March she was laid by with an attack of the prevailing influenza—not in a severe form, but serious on account of her age and weakness. Her medical attendant was from the first doubtful of her recovery. Her friends accepted the warning but did not give up hope, and were encouraged, after weeks of prostration, to see tokens of amendment. What they did not so clearly perceive was, that though there was to be a partial recovery, she would never regain her former little strength ; the thread of life was henceforth feeble, and though she lived more than two years longer she was never the same again. She was at the usual week-day meeting at "The Friars" on February 27th, when her voice was heard in the ministry for the last time. Only once more did she attend meeting, and then the exertion seemed too much for her, and it was never afterwards attempted. But her friends were hopeful as they watched her improvement—saw her able to go out again, and at length, in the month of May, to accept an invitation from her friend J. S. Fry to stay at his home on Durdham Down. It was a delightful change from Brunswick Square, and she greatly enjoyed her visit and the pleasant drives in the neighbouring country, which was much more accessible from this spot than from her own home. Writing at this time she says in a note addressed to myself :

"Dim as is my sight, I am ready to ask if the trees and the country ever were so beautiful before. It was so delightful to thread about the lanes with the hedges so close that I could *see* the beauty of the fresh bright leaves. Surely there are compensations even in the loss of privilege, for one values so much more what one retains."

While on the Down she was nearer than usual to many of her friends, so that visitors abounded, and she received them with all her old cordiality and sweetness. But she felt that she had not regained her strength, and this soon became painfully evident when, after a month's absence, she returned home. She was advised to try further change, and went to Portishead, where she had a quiet, refreshing time.

To Rebecca Zaytoun.

"10th of Seventh Month, 1895.

"There is much we cannot understand. If it was not so where would be the exercise of faith? It seems to me that when no light comes on our path there is a call for heart searching, to learn if there be anything in our feelings or our conduct that is causing the Lord to withhold His counsel until we are more able to receive it with profit. If it be so, it will doubtless be shown to the sincere seeker. But if in sincerity of heart we can appeal to Him without censure for guidance and teaching of His will, there can but be the privilege still ours of leaving ourselves and our affairs in His most wise and loving hands. And He does all things well, and makes all work together for good to them that love Him."

She reported herself to Hannah Southall as feeling "much firmer and better" before she left Portishead, but soon after she was attacked by a new and troublesome complaint, which caused much pain and sleeplessness, and altered her appearance more than anything that had gone before. As soon as possible after this malady had disappeared she resumed her former habits, even coming down to breakfast; she enjoyed a visit from Hannah Southall and saw many of her Bristol friends. But in the autumn she took cold, bronchitis supervened, from which indeed she rallied, but only henceforth to be a complete invalid. The sunny upstairs drawing-room, which looked out on the green in the centre of the square, and was as pleasant as was possible in the city, was fitted up as a bed-room. Here she spent the winter, often much prostrated by weakness, but perfectly clear in mind, and alive to the interests of former years. The political events of the day shared her attention still; it must have been in the spring of 1896 that a cousin, who was taking M. C. Salmon's place for a short time, was aroused at her eagerness to hear about the Budget as soon as the morning paper was brought. Her sufferings at this time were not acute, but there was enough to make—not exactly her patience which never failed—but her unclouded serenity, remarkable to those who witnessed it from day to day. Her whole appearance—the worn face and wasted hands, sometimes the feeble voice — gave the impression of such exceeding frailty, that it seemed wonderful

that the inner self was so entirely the same—the same mental grasp, the same real and understanding sympathy, the same calm judgment, and something more than the same tenderness and sweetness. She was still able, care being taken in arranging their visits, to see her more intimate friends, and occasionally others ; and these were times, especially during the last summer of her life, when the old freedom and discursiveness which had marked intercourse with her, did not seem unwelcome or out of place. Gradually the opportunities narrowed, the number of those who desired to see her making them more difficult to secure, while the fear of wearying her checked the flow of talk, or confined it to subjects which seemed worthy to occupy the short and precious time. Some of her words spoken on such occasions come back to the memory with force and vividness, bearing as they seemed to do a stamp of value from the saintly character of the speaker and her nearness to the eternal world. She knew how to cheer the hearts of those who might be discouraged as to their service, or to comfort those who were troubled and anxious about the welfare of others. "The lesson of a long life," she said with emphasis, on one occasion, "is one of *hope*, and not of despair." Her faithful friends C. R. Charleton and J. S. Fry were among her most constant visitors, and Hannah Southall came to spend a few days from time to time.

Ann Hunt was not during all this period longing

to depart, though in her state of weakness and frequent sleeplessness it would not have been surprising had this been the case. She still felt as if she had "a work of lowly love to do" for her Lord, and she was glad to remain a little longer, if thereby she could cheer or help any of those for whom He lived and died. Her busy pen was almost laid down; weakness and want of sight deprived her of that mode of service, and when some special circumstances called forth the effort to express her tender sympathy in writing, her notes were scarcely legible, yet were they highly prized by those who received them, while they sadly noted the contrast to the old letters so well written in every sense of the word. She did not often talk much of death. Some months before the end she seemed to wish me to know that it was much in her mind, and that she was very peaceful in the prospect, so looking at me she said: "My dear, I can say, 'If Thou art near I shall not fear to die.'" The words were from a hymn which I had sent to her niece on her dying bed. Scarcely inclined to talk about it, I finished the verse:

"My sins are many, but Thy mercy more,
Thou wilt be with me when the waves are high,
I shall be with Thee on that other shore,
Where I shall know Thee as I now am known,
Saved to the uttermost by Thee alone."

The following to Caroline E. Stephen was dictated to Mary C. Salmon, the accompanying note being dated February 4th, 1897:

"I want her to know that it is not all calm and joyful waiting for the summons to come; perhaps it is really the Land of Beulah, for there is a looking over sometimes to the City beyond, but I find that it requires a firm footing, for the soil is apt to slide and carry one down into the lower levels. I find that the armour is wanted still, especially perhaps the shield of faith, for the fiery darts still sometimes reach those who have escaped the enemy's power. And there is need of such a deep experience of the things whereof we speak. I should like, however, to say that some of those long, wakeful, suffering nights that I have passed through are times especially remembered with thankfulness for the nearness of intercourse, as it seemed to me, that was permitted. And the light that shone upon different portions both of the Scripture and of views of truth, such as continually remains to be a comfort and a help. I do not speak of these things, they are too sacred, and yet to her* there may be something like face answering to face. I feel indeed there is no separation either by life or death from the love in which we are one."

In the month of March, Elizabeth and Hannah Southall took lodgings for a time at Clifton, in order to be able to see something once more of their beloved friend. H. S. was often with her in the morning, and speaks warmly of her brightness and cheerfulness, and of how much A. Hunt seemed to enjoy talking with her. She said one day to them both, "Yes, it gets brighter and brighter, instead of

* To the person for whom the message was dictated.

duller and duller. All is clear, more than ever. Sometimes I have such beautiful thoughts; many things come into my mind as I lie here." Then she continued: "All have a service; we must not think because we are laid by that there is nothing for us to do." She was reminded, "They also serve who only stand and wait," to which she replied, "He filleth the waiting soul with His goodness."

On the 30th of March a message was sent to her from the Meeting on Ministry and Oversight, expressive of the sympathy of her friends and of the loss they had sustained in the withdrawal of her presence and help. She was much gratified with this. "I have had a lovely message from 'M. and O.,'" was her remark to myself when I called on her soon afterwards, and she dictated a message in return. It seemed as if, in her deep humility, she had not been aware that her influence in such meetings had been so truly felt.

The end was now drawing near, she was extremely weak, and one after another of her loving friends went to see her—sometimes with the belief, and sometimes without realising that it was for the last time. If any of them came when she was too ill to see them, she would often send down an affectionate message. "Tell her some of my latest thoughts have been of her" was one given on an occasion of this kind, and when very near her end she sent messages to absent friends. To one she quoted the words, "I know in whom I have believed, and

He is able ——," but weakness prevented her from finishing the passage. To another, "He loved me, and gave Himself for me." Once she said, "I feel peaceful; I never had anything to trust to but God's mercy in Christ, and that I trust to now. I feel He has taken me to be His own."

She had most loving and tender care, M. C. Salmon and her devoted servant attending her by day, and a nurse, to whom she had become attached, watching over her by night. Towards the last, when almost wandering, she said, "It is time for Jesus to come." It was the first time in her long illness that she had expressed a desire to depart. Her kind watcher rejoined, "You would like to go to Him?" "I *have* gone to Him already"—words which seemed to imply that for her death would be no abrupt transition—the Lord was with her now on earth, and would be with her "on that other shore."

Sunday, the 18th, passed quietly, but the next morning brought with it much pain and restlessness. Once more she sent a message to an absent friend, concluding it with the lines, which she had not strength to finish:

> "My knowledge of that life is small,
> The eye of faith is dim,
> But 'tis enough that Christ knows all,
> And I shall be with Him."

She was conscious throughout, and bore her sufferings with unfailing patience. Once she said, "I shall soon be gone." Her friend said, "You

remember the Ministry and Oversight Meeting is to-night?" She answered, emphatically, "Yes."

The evening twilight was gathering, and she was alone with her faithful friend, when at an unexpected moment the bonds of earth were loosed, and she passed quietly away.

She died on the 19th of April, 1897, in the eighty-seventh year of her age.

The intelligence of her departure was brought to the Meeting on Ministry and Oversight which had not failed to be present to her thoughts. A deep feeling of solemnity followed the receipt of the tidings. It was no occasion for *lament*, though there were some there, and many more who were not present, who felt, and who still feel that the loss was of a kind that is in a true sense irreparable. But thankfulness for her life and service, and for her peaceful release from pain and weakness rose to their hearts, and was reverently expressed before the close of the meeting.

On the 23rd, amidst a large concourse of relations and friends of every description, the worn tenement of clay was laid to rest in the old Friends' burying-ground at "The Friars." Close to the Meeting-house which was endeared to her by so many associations, and itself the spot where lay many of her departed friends, it was for her a fitting resting-place, though surrounded by houses and far away from country solitude and peace. Just at that time of year, how-

ever, the dreariness of this burying-ground is relieved by the sweet touches of spring green, and these may be typical enough of the faith and hope that illuminated a life dark in many of its passages, yet leading onward with more and more "shining unto the perfect day."

CHAPTER XII.

Recollections of Ann Hunt, by Hannah Southall.

"My first remembrance of Ann Hunt goes back into early years, when she came with her only sister Rebecca to visit my grandmother. Her brightness and sympathetic friendliness soon won our childish hearts. It was not till about ten years later that I recall her again when we were both staying with relatives at Torquay and had some delightful walks and excursions. In another decade we were thrown together in a visit which I paid at 'The Fort,' and from this time a bond was formed which circumstances only welded with firmer and firmer links as time rolled on, bringing its strange web in which blessings and trials were inextricably woven.

"Perhaps, to those who only knew Ann Hunt in the serene brightness and calm of the evening light, it would be impossible to reach the influences by which her character was moulded. Her nature was one of singular sensitiveness, and the sweet calm of the exterior gave but little index of the power of passion-

ate love which lay beneath, and it was this nature which, welded in the furnace and brought under the sanctifying power of Christ, yielded the gold well refined, which all recognised in later years who were brought within the magic circle of her influence. This influence had a kind of centrifugal power, which made her first a unique bond of union in the family circle and then an equally attractive centre to those not drawn together by the ties of kinship.

"She had in a greater degree than I have ever known, long-suffering, tenderness, and love for the erring, and the knowledge of this faithful love and the suffering it had brought to herself made many of us regard her with deeper reverence and closer affection.

"Her life may be divided into two portions, that spent in the old home at 'The Fort,' and that at No. 9, Brunswick Square. In the first she shone as daughter, sister and aunt. Brunswick Square is not an especially attractive locality, but it was astonishing to how great a degree it became so during the time she resided there. There was always such a welcome to her home. Tennyson speaks this feeling of entering there after absence:

> 'Doors where my heart was wont to beat
> So quickly waiting for a hand.'

"Then in earlier times, there were the night hours when, feet on fender, we used to sit and talk (and no interest was too small to share) and then commune

together of those deeper things that touch our lives with their hidden meaning.

"Those hours were all the more prized, because at this time there were so many to share the privilege of her counsels and friendship that few days passed without long interviews claiming her time and thought. She had the hopefulness of true love, that recognises the hidden germ of good, and turns dross into gold and has in some sense the power of making crooked things straight.

"At Nottingham, where I was her companion during the operation for cataract, I recall her sweet patience and the joy with which she received the letters of sympathy her friends so freely bestowed. The renewed gift of sight gave her for a few years the power of more diversified reading, and it was delightful to compare notes on many themes; her mind was so open, and her grasp of ideas so lively and the range of interest wide, and in argument it was almost as great a pleasure to differ as to agree, she was always so quick to see the humorous side of things.

"The later intercourse during the rather slow decline of two years did not give the painful impression failing health not unnaturally sometimes does, because while the bodily powers declined, the mental kept so bright. Inside the curtains of the bed was a feeble form, but the sense of weakness seemed overpowered by the brightness of the spirit. The deep interest in public and social affairs was maintained, constant enquiries showed the absent were not

forgotten, thankfulness for mercies were unfailing. Her bed-side was a haven of rest and peace, while the joyousness of her spirit brimmed over sometimes into real merriment. The secret of her life was abiding trust in One mighty to save. This never failed her in the darkest hour. It had sustained her through a chequered life of more than eighty years, and was found able to support through the Valley of the Shadow of Death."

The following Sketch abridged from a paper by Harriet Newman, written for a corresponding Bible Class, will be read with interest. The subject given was "Influence," and the writer calls her essay "An Illustration":

"Near the centre of one of our large cities is an old-fashioned square, where the dwelling houses have not yet been swept away nor turned into warehouses or offices, but where quiet inhabitants who have not followed the multitude into the suburbs still live within a stone's throw of crowded business streets. We make our way towards a row of houses all exactly alike, and all with an equally uninteresting look, except for the human interest which lies behind, and gives to one door or another an attraction which the rest do not possess.

"We have come by appointment to one of the doors where callers are frequent, and without some previous arrangement you will probably find some

other visitor before you. Many find their way to this quiet house, young and old, rich and poor, people whose lives are widely dissimilar, men and women whose needs are very various, yet it will be their own fault if they go empty away.

"We are soon welcomed in the comfortable old-fashioned sitting-room by the dear Friend past her eighty-fourth birthday, in her Friends' cap and shawl, and we sit down together before the fire as if we had just come back to a corner that had been waiting for us, instead of making an ordinary afternoon call. Ordinary we said, but if these social duties brought us as near together and gave us the communion of spirit which sitting round that cosy hearth does, they would be a power for good that no one would venture to call a waste of time. One girl who had seen something of the influence of those visits asked if she might call there too, and speaking of it afterwards said: 'She talked to me as if I was the one person in the whole world she was interested in.' She probably expressed what many others have felt, as they have found the time pass so quickly while they have sat there and have had that pleasant sense of having something to give as well as take.

"The dear Friend can no longer get out much, or actively mix with others in work and service as she once could, and you may have the privilege of telling of someone you have met or a meeting you have attended, with the encouraging remark, 'Oh, I was wanting to hear more about that,' or, 'I expect now

thou canst tell me something of so-and-so,' and so you go on from one topic to another of mutual interest, till you lose any idea you may have started with that you would not find much in common with a Friend who has sat at the head of the meeting as long as you can remember, or who will not understand half the ideas which seem so large a part of the modern young person's life.

"You find yourself talking over difficulties which you had not previously thought of mentioning there, and as you listen to the answers to your questionings, given slowly, with a careful choosing of the right words, life seems less intricate and obscure, and you are quite ready to acquiesce in the suggestion that begins, 'But, my dear, doesn't thou think,' etc. You may not have thought so before, but you wonder now that you did not, and as you look out on that dull square and see the last leaves coming down from the trees, or watch burdened men and women hurrying across between lines of iron railings—you take a firmer grasp of the things which are eternal, and you feel fresh patience to go on learning for yourself and others, even if it be but slowly 'of the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.'

"You have no reason for thinking that your call has been exceptional, and you marvel at the widespread influence which advancing age has so little power to check. Some reference to a new book leads you to ask, 'Canst thou read much now?' and the answer is, 'No, only when the print is very clear and

the light good, but I have several young friends who kindly come regularly to me, and she added brightly, 'I can still read hand-writing for myself, because the letters are not so close together'; and thus the limitations of life sink into nothingness, as all the possibilities that remain are so thankfully used."

JOHN T. DORLAND,

WITH NOTES OF SOME OF HIS BIBLE READINGS AND ADDRESSES.

By W. KING BAKER.

Edited by ANNE W. RICHARDSON, B.A.

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